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YEARNINGS.

BY MRS. MARY P. SCHUYLER.

Only to lay my poor, weary head
  On some faithful breast and whisper my pain,
Only to know that life holds for me
  Some pledge that I have not lived in vain.

Only to glance at the mystical page
  Of the future and read my own dreary lot,
Only to know one heart beats for me—
  That I in my loneliness am not forgot.

Only to drink from Lethe's still stream
  And feel its sweet calm o'er my worn senses creep:
Only to lie with cold folded hands,
  Never again to wake or to weep.

Only to know that Heaven will be mine
  After life's tiresome journey is done—
Only to know though the storm-clouds be dark
  Behind them is hidden the bright shining sun.

ALONG THE LINE.

BY GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.

AUTHOR OF "BENEATH THE SEA" "UNDER WILD SKIES" ETC, ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

POT-POURRI.

MR. STACEY came over to the farm the following day, and I could feel that he was much troubled in mind, for his voice shook a little when he spoke to me, and I could hear his quick, nervous way when addressing Frank or Kate.

I could tell as if I read his heart.

He felt that he was bound in honor to keep his engagement—that he would be called to account by Frank if he did not; and yet that I was so different from the girl to whom he believed he had given his heart.

I felt that it would be best to let things change gradually.

Time would bring it right, I felt sure.

So during his visits I conversed as if there was nothing between us whatever.

It was with a feeling of gratitude towards her, though, that I found Miss Lint's declaration that I should visit her to be no empty promise; for one day, at the end of a week, while I was sitting telling Vi some old-fashioned story, here came the sound of wheels, and the slow, heavy trot of horses.

"Who is that, Vi, darling?" I said.

"Don't know. Never mind. What did the prince do then, Aunty Dinny?"

"Then the prince went straight away through the woods, to where the great crystal pool lay so dark and still in the shade; and bending down, he tried to look right into its depths, where—"

"Well, little one, are you ready?"

And I felt Miss Lint's bony hand upon my shoulder.

"No, aunt," I said, "I'm not ready; but in a few minutes, if Kate—"

"Oh, here is Kate," said the old lady. "Now, Kate, how are you? Your child grows. I hope she is good."

"Yes, aunt—very," said Kate, approaching, I suppose, to kiss her; but the old lady said, pettishly—

"There, that will do. I'm hot and tired; and when I'm hot and tired, I'm cross. Help Jenny to get ready. I'm going to take her away."

"To take Jenny away?"

"Yes on a visit. There don't stare but be quick, or my horses will be asleep."

Kate came to my side.

"Will you go, dear?" she said.

"Yes, I shall be glad to go," I said earnestly.

"And Mark Stacey?"

"Please, help me to get ready, Kate" I said quietly.

Then she went with me out of the room. It did not take me many minutes to prepare, Kate promising to send me on more things the next day: so we were soon down to find little Vi crying bitterly in a corner, and ready to fly to her mother, full of trouble because—

"Te would tare at me toe."

"Pah, I only looked at the child, and asked her if she would have some sweets, when she began to shriek," said the old lady indignantly.

"Come, little woman, I must lead you; but you ought to lead me."

Her word's pricked me; but I only smiled as her fingers closed round mine.

"Let me say good-bye," I whispered to her, and she released my fingers again.

Five minutes after we were in the carriage and I was feeling sad, and yet relieved at being away from the farm.

"Don't you think you are very foolish, child?" said the old lady, after we had sat in silence for a time, during which she spoke sharply to the coachman, and tapped a dog for snarling at me.

"Why foolish?" I said, turning to her.

"For coming to stay with such a queer, crotchety old woman as I am?"

"I think it very kind of you to come and fetch me, aunt," I said, quietly.

* * * * * *

It was a curious experience, my stay at the Manor House, as it was called.

To my great surprise, I found that in spite of her sharp, crotchety speech and abrupt manner, the old lady thoroughly devoted herself to avoiding, though in a most graceful way, everything that might suggest pity for my condition.

"Look here, little Jenny!" she said sharply—"you don't know this house."

"No aunt," I said; "I've only been in the drawing-room."

"Where you are not going now till you have been educated to the place, for fear of knocking down some of my bric-a-brac. I don't even allow the dogs there, Now, look here—I was going to have a bed made for you on the ground floor; but I thought you would soon learn your way about. Let's have a walk round now."

She took my hand as she spoke, and led me out of the breakfast-room, where, this conversation had taken place.

"Now, child, you are standing on the mat with your back to the hall door, so take your first geography lesson. Come—one, two, three, four steps, stretch out your hand.

"That's the hall table, and you'll always find some flowers there in a vase. You silly children always like flowers."

"Thank you, aunt; they are sweet," I said trying to hide my tears.

"Now, face round, child, and take six steps across the hall."

I did so.

"Now, stretch out your hand. What's that?"

I placed my hands on a table, and said so.

Then on it they came in contact with a great china jar.

"Take off the lid, child, and thrust in your hand. Now, what is it?"

"Pot-pourri, aunt. How sweet!"

"Yes, child, pot-pourri—dead, dry leaves and sweet gums; old pleasant odors of the past.

"You'll find plenty of such dead memories here.

"Lavender strewed in your drawers, and rosemary, and lemon thyme; they are the only things that keep their scent—these old plants."

There was a ring of pain and bitterness in her voice as she spoke, and I laid my hand upon her arm, while the other went up to her face; for I saw now with my fingers, and they told me many things in a way you would little suspect.

What they told me at this moment was simple enough—that the old lady's cheeks were wet; the cause, some sad old memories, brought up by the words she had uttered.

And my next action did what, she told me afterwards, won my way to her dear, eccentric, strange old heart; for, feeling that she was in trouble, I placed my arm round her neck, and kissed her on her poor old cheek.

She started from me as if she had been stung; then she caught me by the shoulders, and seemed to be holding me at a distance, regarding me suspiciously, till my sightless eyes were raised wonderingly to her face, when she caught me to her breast, kissed me sharply on my lips, and turned away.

"Try and find your own way abo[illegible] child," she said.

I noticed here that her voice was now changed.

Then there was the rustle of her stiff silk dress over the slippery oak floor; I heard a door close, and I was alone.

Once more alone, I felt my way back to the table and the pot-pourri jar, feeling that it would be pleasant to embalm the past, even as these sweet rose leaves were preserved, and, forgetting the thorns by which they were surrounded, breathe only their fragrance—dwelling here, in the calm peace of this silent old Manor House, where all was so peaceful and so still.

I plunged my hand, then, deeply into the great, fragrant heap, and raised it to my face.

Then, kissing the leaves, I breathed one word into them, telling myself that that memory made them sweeter far, as it was buried there.

And as I replaced them, and the great china cover, the old, old house appeared to me once more, with its sunny lawn, and its moonlit garden, and those two strong arms holding up my trembling little form to that great heart, as I seemed to hear his very words——

"Jenny, I wish I had been a better man, for your sake. God bless you, child. God bless you. It is too late."

I remained standing there some time, till the slow, heavy beat of a great eight-day clock brought me to myself; and I went along the wall, feeling my way past carved picture frames and heavy wainscoting, till I reached the great clock standing in its corner like a coffin or mummy case, in which was preserved the dead time, that kept passing away as the pendulum swung to and fro.

It was coming so easy to me, this going about quite alone.

I never hardly struck against anything, always feeling when I was near to danger; and at the end of another minute I was standing by the foot of the staircase, with my hand upon the carved oaken lion.

Then slowly up the great, wide staircase I went to the upper floor, where there was the same sweet perfume as below—the same calm silence, only broken by the heavy tic-tac, tic-tac of the clock.

Here, in a large bay window, I found the source of the perfume—great china jars on stands, and one could plunge one's hand far in the fragrant litter.

I stood here for a few minutes, and then slowly felt my way along again once more over the shining, slippery oak boards when I stopped listening.

"Is some one there?" I said.

"Yesmiss. I'vecometoshowyourroom."

This was said by a sharp, harsh voice; the speaker joining all her words in a sentence together, into one long rapidly uttered word.

"Thank you," I said.

"Who are you?"

"Dollymiss."

"Thank you, Dolly," I said, holding out my hand.

"May I touch you?"

"Lordnomiss! I'mnotfittotouch."

"I want to know what you are like," I said, smiling.

And I passed my hand over a thin, sharp face, with a narrow forehead, light hair, and a pointed chin.

It seemed to me that the hair must be light, it was so silky, and dark hair could not go with such keen features.

"If you will show me once, Dolly," I said, "I shall not have to trouble you again."

"Butindeedyouwillmiss. Youcan'tgeton without. Missusneversaidnothingaboutno blindyoungladieswhensheengagedme."

This was said in an ill-used tone of voice.

"I shall only be here for a few days, Dolly," I said; "and I want no help."

"Why you're going to stop altogether miss. Missushashadaroomfurnishedforyou."

"Oh, no, Dolly; you are mistaken," I said.

"I shall only be here for a few days."

"AndIsupposeI'mtowashyeranddressyer andleadyerabout."

I shook my head, and the woman led me to a door, and upon its being opened, I entered a room more fragrant than the rest of the house.

So still, too, and calm that I was glad to sit down, after making myself acquainted with its size, and the relative positions of bed, drawers, and dressing-table; Dolly telling me to "Ringifyouwantanything."

And then going out of the room in a jerky manner.

In about a quarter of an hour or so, I heard the door open, and the rustle of a silk dress told me who entered.

"Do you like your room, my dear?" said my aunt, as I rose to meet her.

I could not help noticing then how changed was her tone.

There was something exquisitely tender, too, in the way in which she passed one arm round me, and stroked my hair, as I told her it was all I could wish.

"Then. now we'll go down and have some dinner, my dear," she said; "and you shall learn how a crotchety old woman, like I am, contrives to live, petting dogs, and finding fault.

"Ah, child, what lovely soft hair; you've got.

"Mine used to be as soft once, when I was young like you, child—fifty years ago, child—fifty years ago!"

How quaint and old world-like everything was there!—for the old lady lived in good style.

There were wax candles on the table, and old-fashioned plate and quaint glasses.

There was a quiet, old-fashioned butler; and the footman sounded to me like an elderly man, as he spoke in a subdued whisper.

My aunt said grace aloud, and I sat opposite to her; and then there was the faint click of the soup tureen cover being taken off.

Next, the fish took the place of the soup, and I heard a great cover taken off the dish.

"Bring Don's plate," said my aunt; and I heard a little talking going on. "Mind that bone, Joseph!"

"Yes, mum," was the answer.

"Now, Prince's plate," said my aunt.

And this seemed to be filled, while a rap, rap, rap, as of a dog's tail sounded on the carpet.

"Nip did not behave himself well in the carriage to-day," said my aunt. "I think I sha'n't give him any dinner."

Here there was a doleful howl, apparently from under the sideboard.

"But you may bring his plate,' continued my aunt.

An order which produced an eager whine and there came a scuffling of feet, a few quick, low barks, the slamming of a door; and it was evident that Joseph, the footman, had taken the plates out of the room, followed by the dogs.

There was an excellent dinner and my aunt made a point of helping the dogs from nearly everything before she partook of any dish herself; but at last it was over, and the old lady led me into the drawing-room, where she seated me by her on the sofa.

"Now, my child," she said, tenderly, "don't you think I'm a very quaint old woman?

"Don't be afraid to speak."

"I think you must be very lonely here, aunt; and I suppose it has amused you, petting your dogs."

"Lonely, child?—yes," she said, with a heavy sigh—"a lonely, lonely life.

"A wasted life, my child—without an aim."

"Are you fond of dogs?" I said, to break the uncomfortable silence.

"No, child, I hate them; I have lived to hate everything.

"What have I had to love?

"Jenny, do you think you could make up your mind to stay with me?

"I sha'n't live much longer, and I am getting very lonely here."

"Would you like me to stay, aunt?" I said; for it seemed to me that it would be a pleasant, restful life here, where I could be of some use, and pass my time in a gentle, peaceful calm.

"Yes, I should like you to stop, child.

"I mean you to stay, if you will.

"That is your room, if you will make this your home, and bear with my whims."

"You would never be unkind to me, aunt," I said, "I'm sure."

As I smiled up in her face, quite unconsciously, my pitiful-looking eyes were raised to hers.

"God knows, child, I don't think I could be," she said, kissing me.

"Then you shall stay, Jenny; for I know all, my poor girl.

"There, there, don't cry; I mean it kindly.

"I knew what it was to love once, child; but proud parents frowned on it, and I was forced to refuse him, and other offers too, because those who made them did not belong to our set.

"So I grew old, and yellow, and soured, with all woman's natural love for a husband, or offspring, nipped off by worldly frosts; and I've passed my useless life petting dogs, and cats, and birds, and quarreling with my neighbors, and going to law.

"And now, child, I'm going to try and prove sensible in my old age, and pet you."

"But I shall be so useless, aunt," I said, pitifully.

"I can't read to you, nor wait upon you."

"I've got servants to do those matters, child; and I can get everything, nearly, for my money.

"Jenny, my child, I am seventy-five, and I've gone through life thirsting for one thing that I could never get—love.

"Child," she continued, piteously, "for the few hours I have to stay longer on this earth, do you think that you could love me?"

"Aunt, dear," I said, gliding down, to kneel before her on the carpet, and place one arm round her thin form, while my pitiful eyes opened once more to try and gaze in hers, as my busy fingers crept to her face, to touch it lightly and caress it—"Aunt, dear, I'll try with all my heart."

I did not expect the result that followed, for she bent her head down on my neck, and sobbed hysterically.

"Bless you, my child!" she cried at last—"I believe you will.

"I have been cursing my life, too, and saying 't was a burden; and now you have come to show me how I have wasted my time."

She was the first to break the silence, by speaking, kissing me affectionately, and then smoothing my hair.

"There, my darling," she exclaimed, "I think we understand each other better now.

"Why, child, child!" she cried, sharply, "you've made a pretty beginning to-day.

"Here, I don't believe I've shed a tear for twenty years, and then they were only tears of vexation.

"But, there, we won't say any more.

"Only, Jenny, child," she said, very softly, as she kissed both my blank-eyes, "remember this—for nearly fifty years I've been growing harsh, and cross, and soured.

"Recollect that there's a hard, flinty shell over me; but you know that, when you see me cold and bitter, there's something better within."

I smiled my answer; and she sat holding and patting my hand, while she made plans for the future.

"Let me see, my dear, I shall read to you, and you shall play to me—you will be able to play?"

"Oh, yes," I said, joyfully.

For I felt that that power had been left me, as far as memory and attempts by ear would carry me.

"Then we will try the instrument now."

She led me across the room, and opened the instrument, placing the music stool for me; and I sat down, and swept my fingers over the keys.

Alas! it was an old, old harpsichord, with not a note in tune, its wires rusted, and the keys rattled like the bones of a dead and gone skeleton of an instrument of the past; while the strange jangle I produced sounded ancient, mournful, and depressing.

"Ah, Jenny," said my aunt, sadly, and she laid her hands on mine—"that poor old thing is a type of this wreck.

"Neglect and time have done their work upon it.

"I have not touched it for thirty years. There, child, there—let's shut it up; and they shall send me one from town."

She led me back to the sofa; and there we sat till the urn was brought in, and I pleased her mightily by asking leave to make the tea, which I easily did—the old lady saying, with a pitiful quiver in her voice, that she had not tasted such a cup for years.

Bed-time at last; and the servants came in to listen to the prayers—read by the old lady in a sharp, hard voice—and then we went to our rooms.

In mine, I heard a step.

"Is that you, Dolly?"

"Yes, Dollymiss," said the woman. "I've cometerundressyer."

"Thank you," I said, "I can manage. Good-night, Dolly."

"Goodnightmiss."

And it was said in a softer tone.

I had laid my head on the pillow, feeling sweetly at peace in that faintly perfumed linen, when I heard a door open softly; and there was a slight rustle, as of some one approaching.

"It is only I, child," said my aunt; and I heard the chink of a silver candlestick on the marble washstand.

"My room is next to yours. That door in the corner leads to it.

"Good-night."

I reached toward her, but she was gone. Perhaps it was an hour after, when I had dropped off into that pleasant, drowsy state between sleeping and waking, that I heard the rustle again; and this time two thin, soft lips were pressed to mine, and a voice said, in a whisper—"God bless her!"

* * * * * *

I was up and dressed, sitting with my window open, enjoying the cool air and the faint sunshine, when there came a rap at my bed-room door; and on my crying "Come in!" I heard a step, and Dolly exclaimed, wonderingly:

"Loramussymisshowdidyoudressanddoyerair?"

"I am used to dressing myself, Dolly," I said—"and I always lay my things where I can find them."

"[illegible]gyerpardonmiss, but—but——"

"Well, Dolly, but what?"

"Areyousureyoucan'tseeahimmiss?"

I shook my head sadly, and the woman went away, evidently disappointed at having nothing to do.

Soon after, my aunt came rustling into the room, to kiss me quickly and sharply, as if somewhat ashamed of her tenderness of the night before; and then she led me down to breakfast.

They were prayers first; and as soon as they were over, I heard a loud scuffling and scratching at the door, when the three dogs came rushing in, to be scolded and admonished by their mistress, who ended by filling their plates, and sending them out.

"There, child; always attend to your dumb animals first, and then you can enjoy your own meals.

"There's your tea, Jenny; and now I'll cut you some bread and butter."

"Thank you, aunt—I can cut it."

"There, child, don't be so independent?" she cried.

"My hands are not doggy. I've dipped them in the basin, and wiped them on a clean napkin."

"I was not thinking of that, aunt," I replied merrily.

"I wanted only to show you how independent I am."

"Humph!" ejaculated the old lady, who then rattled the sugar tongs a great deal, seemed to fill her own cup and plate, and next made a great rattling noise with a newspaper.

"Do you like politics, my child?" she said then, very stiffly.

"I'm afraid I am very ignorant of the subject, aunt," I replied.

"I'm glad of it, child. Politics are a pest.

"Everybody duns politics into your head; they fill the papers with politics; they cram the world with politics.

"If I had my way, Jenny, I'd make all the Tories and Whigs hang one another and leave the world in peace.

"They are half of them shams, and the other half catch the complaint."

"But we must have a Government, Ministry, and Parliament, aunt."

"No, child, certainly not.

"Parliament's a place where men go to reconstruct the world and benefit the people; and when they get there, they only argue, and talk, and shilly-shally.

"Look here, child; out of the two parties how many think more of the people than they do of place and position?

"I haven't patience! What shall I read?"

"Anything you like, aunt."

"Stuff, child!

"Have a choice of your own. I always read the little paragraphs first.

"Hum-um-um—fatal fall from a window. Yes, of course; a wicked wretch of a mistress setting her servants to clean outside windows.

"If I were a judge, that woman should never have another servant.

"Hum-um-um," she continued—"terrible case of burning—clothes caught—oh, what a wicked old woman I am!"

I had been unable to suppress a faint cry; for her words had brought back that dreadful scene, and then I began to tremble violently.

I suppose my nerves had not yet recovered from their shock.

But I was smiling the next minute; for, with all her sharp way of speaking gone, my aunt came round, and was down on her knees by my side, scolding herself, as she tenderly caressed me, and told me not to mind.

I got her back to her place by asking her to read me some of the news; and she began to rustle the paper about very sharply, naming the heads of the different articles as she went on, till she read out, quite excitedly:

"Terrible railway collision. Fifteen lives lost; thirty wounded.

"Come, that's a comfort, my dear; we have not had one for a month, at least."

"Aunt!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, my dear," she said, "it's a weakness of mine.

"I love a good railway accident; because I hate railways, and companies, and directors, and all the rest of them.

"Ugh, the wretches!"

"Why, dear aunt, why?" I said.

"Why, child?

"Didn't they come and cut through my beautiful fields, after I had said distinctly that I would not have them there?

"Didn't they bring instruments and measures, and get those noodles in Parliament to give them leave to make the line and pass the act?

"And, worst insult of all, after robbing me of my fields, didn't they offer me compensation?

"No, my child, I wanted none of their dirty compensation money."

"It must have been very provoking, aunt," I said.

"It was, my dear; but I have had a nice bit of revenge since, with the accidents they have, and the damages they have to pay? It's very dreadful, isn't it?

"The accidents, aunt?"

"No, I mean of me, child.

"It all comes of being so cross-grained and strange.

"There, I won't read about the accident, for it may upset you. Your nerves are not strong yet.

"You shall come with me for my drive, though."

"Thank you, aunt," I exclaimed, "I shall enjoy that."

"Don't you be too sure. I shall be going to the railway."

"To the railway, aunt?"

"Yes, child; I drive there every day; to the junction, to watch the signalman; for I know there'll be a horrible accident there some day.

"I'm sure there must be; and when there is, they'll believe me that I was right in not wanting the line."

"But, aunt," I said, nervously, "I would rather not go, please."

"Tut, child!—you don't suppose the accident will happen to-day; but, if it were, wouldn't you like to help the poor foolish creatures who trust their lives in the nasty running boxes?"

"Of course you would, child: and so should I.

"I hate the railways, but they will make them, and kill people; and when they don't kill them, they chop them up."

"Oh, aunt," I cried, shuddering.

"It's quite true, child.

"Look at the poor fellow at the crossing, half-way to Beamish, with only one leg: and the dreadful man at the station here, poor Crookes, with no right arm.

"Ah, child, I may well hate railways."

That morning, punctual to the minute, aunt told me to be ready, the old-fashioned carriage came round, with the sleepy coachman and the sleepy horses that Kate used to laugh so about.

Then the dogs were lifted in, to sit in a row on the front seat; I was handed in next by the butler; and then my aunt took her place beside me, and, without a word, we were driven off through the town, as I supposed, and then along a lane, till the carriage stopped short.

"Now sit quite still, my dear, till you hear the trains pass.

"Where are we now, aunt?" I said.

"Hush, child; don't talk.

"Opposite the signal-box, with my signalman at work.

"If he sees us talking, it may take off his attention; so don't speak.

"For I don't want an accident, though when it comes, I must be here."

We sat there for nearly half an hour, when, as I heard the sound of an approaching train, I could not help a shudder; and I quite sat and shivered as the noise increased, till the train dashed by, with the sound growing fainter till it died away.

"One!" said the old lady excitedly.

"Wake up, sir."

A stertorous breathing that had been going on in front stopped, as I felt my aunt lean forward, as if to poke at something.

But almost at the same moment, I heard the dull roar of another train coming; and I could feel my aunt sit up rigid and still, as she softly whispered—"Hush!"

Nearer and nearer came the train, with its roar getting fiercer; and in the distance there was another rapid beating as of a third train.

My heart suddenly seemed to stand still, for I detected a certain amount of agitation in my aunt, as she clutched my arm tightly, and said, in a low whisper, as if to some one else:

"Take care, man, take care—don't stare out of the window like that! Do you hear!

"They are closer together than ever, and we shall have a crash."

"Aunt, pray go," I whispered.

"Hush, child!" she cried, holding my arm so tightly that it hurt me, while the roar of the approaching trains came nearer and nearer, till they seemed to go by one after the other, with a wild shriek and a rush that was absolutely fearful; and then the panting noise grew lower and lower, till it died away in the distance.

"Not to-day, child, not to-day," said my aunt, in a whisper; "but I thought—I thought—ah! it was very near!"

I quite started as she spoke, and the next minute the carriage was slowly moving over the hard road: but I did not enjoy my ride.

CHAPTER XIII.

REPORTS.

IT was not such a very great thing to be glad about, but I felt wonderfully pleased on the day when, thoroughly strong once more, I had reported myself, and received orders to go on duty.

The man who had been down at my signal-box shook hands warmly on parting.

"I'm glad to go, mate, for I wouldn't work that signal-box for double screw."

"Why?" I said, laughing.

"Because, mate, sooner or later it must come to a horrid smash."

"There, don't talk like that. Nice Job's comforter you are, to a man just off a sick bed."

"Well, perhaps, not being used to the place, I make the worst of it," he said, laughing in his turn.

"It's all right, mate.

"But if ever pyntes wanted careful working, them does; and so I told your mate, Gummer."

"I'm used to them," I said, quietly.

"What is it?" I continued; for he was looking at me in a strange kind of way.

"Well," he said, hesitatingly; "seeing as you've been ill, and perhaps are a bit nervous, it won't be the kindest act in the world to talk you about what I was thinking of saying."

"Well, kind or unkind, you must tell me now," I said; "or the ideal will be worse than the real."

"Eh?" he said, staring blankly.

"I mean, I shall imagine worse things than you would tell me."

"Oh, I see," he said, recovering himself. Well, I was only going to say that of all the unked places I was ever in of a night, that box is the worst."

"Why?" I said.

"Why, mate?

"Hark at the way them wires plays toons, as if all the imps of wickedness, and—never mind where—was fiddling dismal toons on purpose to scare him so that he couldn't do his work.

"Do you know, mate, more'n once I've got so scared that I'd have give anything for a mate to have been with me."

"It is dull, certainly," I said.

"Dull, mate? Why, dull ain't nothing to it.

"I've been in lots o' dull places; but to be up there of a dark night, with those horrible mournful toons played by them wires, it's been too much for me."

"Oh, I used to shut my ears to them."

"Shut your ears, mate? Gammon! No man couldn't shut his ears to them.

"I've been a soldier, you know; and when a comrade died we used to go and bury him to a miserable kind o' toon as was written by a chap called Saul.

"Well, night after night, them wires used to play that there same toon exact, just as if imps were busy over it, so as to make me believe that I was going to do something wrong with the levers, and make a whole lot o' poor creatures want dead marches played for 'em."

"Fancy man—fancy," I said, smiling.

"Perhaps it was, perhaps it wasn't. All the same, it used to worry me horribly; and that wasn't the worst on it."

"What was, then?"

He looked sharply round him, and then laid hold of my sleeve.

"Now look here, mate, I didn't want to, but you would have it."

"Of course. Speak out, man, speak out."

"I'm a-going to, if you will have it," he said, in a whisper.

"Well, what is it?"

He gave another look round, and then, approaching his lips to my ear—

"Matey, do you believe in ghosts?"

"No," I said, flatly—"I don't.

"No more did I till I come down here," he said, with a shudder; "but I do now."

"Why?"

"Why? Here, just tell me this. Has there been any horrid accident here?"

"There have been accidents, I believe," I said; "but not in my time."

"I knowed there had been one," he said, solemnly.

"Well, mate, them as were killed haunts the spot."

"Rubbish, man!" I said, laughing.

"Call it what you like," he said; "but it's true.

"I've seen them?

"Seen whom, man?"

"Them as was killed, or him, or it, or whatever it is.

"Anyhow, I've seen something.

"Warn't one as was killed—took off—cut up by the nine-fifty?"

"Well, yes," I said, thoughtfully. "It was a porter who was killed through the train being sent on to the other line, and shunted off again at the switches by the distance-signal, in consequence of repairs."

"I knew it," he said, triumphantly.

"How?"

"Well, he comes and haunts the box of a night, to see the points worked as caused his death, as is quite natural. But it's very horrid."

"Why, whatever have you got into your head?" I said uneasily.

"Matey," he said, tapping my arm, "this ain't no nonsense, but truth. If I've seen him once, I've seen him a dozen times."

"Where?"

"Staring in at me in the signal-box, and then, then, when I've rushed out to look, he's been gone."

"Fancy, man—fancy," I said.

"Perhaps it is," he said; "but all the same, I've seen him.

"Ah, and I've seen him, too, creeping

along in the darkness upon the rails. You don't think he was buried there, do you, and can't rest?"

"Pooh, nonsense!" I said, laughing. "It's all fancy, my dear fellow."

"P'r'aps it is," he said, rather sadly; and then he sent a shudder through me by his parting words.

"You look out, though, first dark night, and see if there ain't something hanging about your signal-box, or watching the trains. I may be a fool, but I have got eyes."

We did not part the best of friends; for it was evident that the man thought me very sceptical.

But whatever I thought, I kept it to myself.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Sweet Charity.

BY FRANK Q. SMITH.

MR. and MRS. MALCOLM BLYTHE were seated at breakfast.

The steak was broiled to perfection, and the aroma from the steaming coffee-urn sent forth an appetising odor.

But as the young wife watched her husband's enjoyment of the daintily-cooked viands, her face wore a look of abstraction not usually seen upon it.

At last Mr. Blythe noticed it; and also that she was not eating—but merely toying with the bit of toast upon her plate.

"What's the matter, Letty?" he asked, with a look of concern.

"Are you ill?"

"No, Malcolm, I was only thinking."

Malcolm gave a long, low whistle to emphasise his surprise.

"Thinking! my bright, chatty little girl, stopping her merry nonsense long enough for such an unusual operation! what can it be about?"

Letty drew herself up with an assumption of injured dignity; but her eyes and smiling lips bore witness that she was not deeply offended.

"You treat me so like a child, Malcolm, that I have almost grown to think that, though a married woman, I can still avoid all trying responsibilities, and make life one grand holiday.

"But I am beginning to see things in a new light.

"I may have but the one talent—still I have no right to waste it. I feel thoroughly ashamed of myself to be such an idler in this busy world."

Malcolm looked into the earnest eyes with a mock seriousness of expression in his own brown orbs as he said—

"Well; Puss, I am sorry if I'm going to lose my pleasant little companion, and have a long-faced reformer take her place."

Letty smiled.

"Not so bad as that, I hope. Is it not possible to do something to make other people either better or happier, without being 'long-faced' or disagreeable myself?"

By this time Mr. Blythe was ready to put on his overcoat.

Letty, as usual, helped him to get into it, then put up her lips for a kiss.

She looked very winsome, with the seriousness of an awakening soul clouding her innocent eyes, and giving a somewhat plaintive droop to the lips, clear-cut in their outlines, yet red and pouting as a cleft cherry.

Malcolm kissed her fondly; then, pinching her cheek, playfully said—

"I'll give you a mission for to-day. Put on your pretty things, and go and buy some presents for your little sisters. Then come home with such a bright face that I can warm my heart in its sunshine."

Letty felt a pardonable glow of pride and pleasure in her handsome husband as she watched him stride off, turning now and then to nod another "good-bye" to her, until the tram car came along which was to take him down to his office.

He had bought a neat little phæton for her use, but seldom stepped into it himself.

She sighed as she turned away, though, feeling disappointed that Malcolm had treated the matter so lightly.

But with an effort she threw off the transient cloud, and went to her room to dress and carry out his suggestion.

She was the eldest daughter of a large family.

Her father had never been able to afford his children the luxuries of life out of his limited salary.

So it was a novelty to her to own a purse so plethoric with bank-notes that she could buy a present for every one of her sisters

As she had been married but a few months, it was her first shopping expedition and she soon forgot her serious thoughts in the excitement of selecting something to please each individual taste among the dear ones at home.

Malcolm Blythe was a wealthy, rising young lawyer.

He had been captivated by Letty's pretty modest face, as he listened to her graduation composition, delivered at the closing exercises of the free school of which she had been an exemplary pupil for several years.

He obtained an introduction, and to the surprise of the gay world of which he was considered an ornament, six months after their first meeting Letty was installed mistress of a perfectly-appointed mansion in one of the pleasantest streets in town.

"Dear Malcolm," she thought gratefully, as she stepped into her phaeton and was whirled away. "It isn't every husband who would give his wife leave to spend money for her family."

Her destination was an extensive establishment where nearly every want could be supplied—from a lady's outfit to a child's simplest toy.

As she walked through the different departments she found herself attracted by one face, amid the passing throng.

It was so young, yet so sad; with a strained eager look in the large eyes which gave them an unnatural expression.

Unconsciously Mrs. Blythe followed the girl as she paused before the different counters, then went on again without buying anything.

At last she paused before a counter upon which lay a variety of warm stockings, whose dainty proportions showed that they were intended for tiny feet.

She took up a pair and looked at them, wistfully; at last, with a deep sigh, putting them carefully back in their original place.

As she turned away large tear-drops welled up from their fountains, and stood for a moment in her eyes, then rolled slowly down her cheeks.

"Poor little Nettie," she said, half-aloud, "how I wish I could buy them for you."

"Who is 'little Nettie?'" asked a gentle voice, and looking up, the girl met a glance from Mrs. Blythe's eyes which for the moment deprived her of her power to answer.

It was so kind and sympathetic that her tears came faster and faster.

At last she found her voice, and managed to stammer out, notwithstanding the lump in her throat, which seemed to rise and almost choke her—

"Nettie is my little only sister. We two are all alone in the world, and oh, ma'am, I love her so dearly."

"Did you think those stockings you were looking at would fit her?"

"Yes ma'am; and I've been trying to earn enough money by sewing to get them for her, but I couldn't."

"She shall have some stockings, and some nice warm underclothing, and a dress too. You shall come with me and select them."

It did not take long to make the intended purchases.

Then Mrs. Blythe led the wandering girl out to where her luxuriously-cushioned phaeton was in waiting, and in a few moments they were being whirled rapidly along the crowded streets.

"Now put your hands into my muff and get them nice and warm, while you tell me all about yourself and Nettie. I will take you home, and see where you live and what I can do for you."

Nanny's story was soon told.

I will give it in her own words—

"We live on the top floor of number five, Walton St. Poor mother broke her heart after father's death, and only lived two months. I have earned what I could by doing coarse sewing; but work is cut off and pay was so poor that I hadn't saved anything.

"I've tried to pick up odd jobs, but they are hard to find. I haven't begged yet, though I walked up and down a good while to-day, trying to get up courage to ask for some pennies—just to get Nettie some bread and milk, but I couldn't."

Tears were in Mrs. Blythe's eyes as she listened to the pitiful story.

Then she said—

"She shall not lack again for what she needs. I will help you until work gets brisk again."

As they entered the cold, bare-looking room, it did not seem at first to be tenanted.

But at last a curly head peeped out from under a blanket which covered the meagre apology for a couch.

Little Nettie had crept under it to keep herself warm.

As she caught sight of her sister she gave a glad cry.

Then seeing the strange lady she shrank back timidly.

"Don't be afraid, Nettie," said the kind voice; "I am going to stay here while sister runs and buys some coal and wood, and something to get you a nice warm supper with."

While Nanny was away she produced the warm, bright-colored stockings, and told Nettie to put them on.

It takes but a trifle to make a child forget sorrow, and be gay with the gayest, and Nettie's face absolutely shone with joy, and her baby tongue was soon prattling away as though she had known Mrs. Blythe all her life.

When that lady went home her own heart was full of the reflected happiness which she had bestowed upon Nanny and Nettie

That evening after her husband had donned dressing-gown and slippers, she told him the story of her day's work, half-expecting he would make sport of her in his usual kind, but satirical fashion.

He listened in silence, apparently counting the purple rings which curled upwards from his cigar.

When she had finished he turned to her—

"Do you know what you are doing, Letty? You are encouraging pauperism! It is evidently my duty to reprimand you seriously."

Letty looked at him in a puzzled way: but a merry twinkle in his brown eyes betrayed him.

"Oh, Malcolm! you are too bad! you are making fun of me."

"Not at all, Letty; I shall take your punishment into my own hands at once."

And before the young wife knew of his intentions he drew her upon his knee and kissed her tenderly.

"I see you've fond your mission, Letty; and you may do all the good you wish to while I find the funds. Does that seem right and good in your eyes?"

"Malcolm, you're an angel!"

The answer was somewhat irrelevant, but it was satisfactory.

Mrs. Blythe soon obtained steady employment for Nanny.

Besides being enabled to support herself and little Nettie comfortably, she was slowly and surely laying up a sum of money against a "rainy day."

Would that every happy, prosperous woman felt it to be her mission to lift the burden from some suffering sister.

Sparing something for "sweet charity's sake" out of her own abundance, and thus laying up a store of that imperishable treasure which "neither moth nor rust doth corrupt."

* * *

MEN'S BRAINS.—The human brain is absolutely bigger and heavier than that of any animal except the elephant and the larger whales, but in no other animal is there so great variation in brain weights of different individuals as in man; and it is perhaps a curious fact that the higher the civilization the wider the variation. That is to say, the brain weight in savage races is more nearly uniform than in enlightened nations. While in a general way the average weight of the brain is greater in civilized races, it does not at all follow that the size of the brain is an indication of the degree of intelligence. The average weight of the adult European male brain is forty-nine to fifty ounces. That of the female is forty-four to forty-five ounces, the difference being fully ten per cent. Statistics for America very nearly coincide with this result. There are examples of men of remarkable intellectual attainments whose brains have largely exceeded the average, as Cuvier, sixty-four and a half ounces, and Dr. Abercrombie, sixty-three ounces. Daniel Webster also had a very large brain. That of Agassiz weighed fifty-three and a half ounces, not very much above the average. On the other hand, high brain weights have also been found where there was no evidence of superior intellectual capacity. In an English insane asylum nearly ten per cent. of the cases examined showed a brain weight of over fifty-five ounces. An excessively small brain indicates feeble intellect, and an abnormally large one may indicate the same. Between the extremes there is a wide range, in which it is evident that intellectual power is more dependent on quality than quantity of brain matter. But it is estimated by several competent authorities that in an adult male of anything approaching average size, a brain less than thirty-seven ounces is usually associated with imbecility. In other words, a brain of less than that weight will not confer the reasoning faculty in the civilized Caucasian, though in uncivilized man, a rude intelligence may spring from a brain of thirty ounces.

* * *

A MAN-OSTRICH.—The hospitals of Italy are resolved not to be outdone if they can help it by those of Paris, and they are beginning to announce to the world the living wonders of which they are the happy possessors. At Cremona for instance, the object of interest is not a sleeping girl, or a fasting man, or a giant with twenty-inch feet who cannot walk, but a young man has developed an attack of pleurisy by his peculiar liking for the diet which ostriches are supposed chiefly to affect. From the age of twelve this man of strange appetites has been feeding freely, and without any particular ill-effects, upon pebbles, iron nails and knobs of glass. His capacity for swallowing and accommodating these objects within him was only developed by a considerable course of training, and it was not till he was about fifteen that the youth felt qualified to make public displays of his art. But, by diligent practice, he steadily improved. His most usual method was to take glass balls of a convenient size, well-smoothed or polished, so that there should be no unpleasant friction as they passed down the throat and other internal passages. By degrees he became able to eat from fifteen to twenty pebbles a day, each weighing about three ounces and having a diameter of two and a half inches. Nails could not be quite so readily accommodated; and it was considered good practice to take a dozen or two of them measuring three inches in length, and a third of an inch in diameter at the head. He has, however, when in good form, and supplied with plenty of thick soup to wash them down, been known to do twenty-five such nails at a sitting; and these performances are said to have been attested to the satisfaction of the chief of the Cremona hospital, and medical men. On the whole it is, perhaps, less surprising that he should now be suffering from pleurisy than that he should not have been earlier attacked by a still more troublesome form of malady.

* * *

A HARDY MINER.—Andrew H. Morgan was working alone in the shaft of the Vesuvius mine at Silver Cliff, Col., on Christmas Day, endeavoring to pick out a blast which had failed to explode the day before. Inadvertently he struck the cap and the dynamite cartridge exploded, tearing off his right hand, blinding one eye and breaking one leg in several places. Of course he sank helpless to the floor, and as he was alone there wasn't apparently a ghost of a chance for him, especially as the temperature was bitterly cold. But Morgan is not made of ordinary stuff, and the next morning, twenty hours after the accident, his fellow-workmen found him alive and cheerful. The water in his canteen had turned to ice, but he had kept from freezing to death by rubbing and beating his body with his left hand. He has been removed to his father's home in Iowa, and the doctors say that he will recover.

Bric-a-Brac.

FACTS.—Under ordinary conditions it is estimated that one apple-blossom out of every ten will produce fruit. It has been proved by experiments in France that the mole, when alarmed, can travel along its burrows nearly as fast as a horse can trot.

NOVEL VISITS.—The town of Longview, Tex., has adopted a novel method of making New Year's visits. The prominent gentlemen of the town made their calls on that day in the following ludicrous style: They provided themselves with pieces of brown cardboard about a foot square, on which their names were rudely printed in large type. They presented these visiting cards at the door on a huge dustpan. Each gentleman rode the most ungainly mule that could be found, and was accompanied by a servant mounted on a splendid horse, gayly caparisoned. The servants carried the mammoth visiting cards in a basket. Such is the wild and untrammelled freedom of life in the Lone Star State.

THE AVERAGE WEIGHT.—The number of persons weighed at the recent Cincinnati exposition was 22,155, of whom two-thirds were women. The average of the men was 154.03 pounds—1253 heavier than the average of several thousand men taken in Boston in 1864—and that of the women 130.87 pounds, which is 6.37 pounds heavier than the Boston average. Ohio men and women average respectively 157.38 and 123.25 pounds; southern Indiana and Illinois men and women 158.52 for men and 133.76 for women. The mean of these averages is so much above the general average as to attract attention. For men it is 4.09 pounds higher and for women 2.05 pounds. The very high and approximate average of those from Southern Indiana and Illinois and from Kentucky recalls the Kentucky origin of the former.

MICHIGAN FROGS.—The marshes between Detroit and Lake St. Clair, are said to be the resort of millions of frogs; and it is asserted that more frogs are sold in Detroit than in any other city of its size. During the frog season heavy shipments are made to New York, Boston, and other Eastern cities. The commercial frog is said to be as suspicious as a wolf, as wild as a deer, and as shrewd as a fox. A good hunter however has been known to capture two hundred frogs per day, but three or four dozen legs are considered a fair day's bag. The animals are not worth catching until they are two years old, and are not "prime" until they reach the age of five. Frogs have been caught in the St. Clair marshes weighing as much as seven pounds and having legs almost like drumsticks. One was caught at the head of Belle Isle two years ago which kicked the beam at nine.

THE TURK.—The Turk has been called unspeakable; a bold rhetorical figure, when we consider how much we have been spoken of. In one sense no epithet could well be less happy. There is nothing ineffable about the Turkish system as such. Its distinctive feature is its rigid matter-of-fact character. It consists in literal adherence to a few general rules. Even among well-educated Christians it may frequently be observed that few persons are apt to be more cruel than a conscientious man who has no imagination. Now the average Turk has not much imagination; his conscience is such as is formed by his religion—that is, by the broad views and injunctions of the Koran; and his education is not calculated to correct or moderate this. The average Turk is absolutely indifferent to the results produced by applying his general rules; all that is the will of Allah. What he, as a servant of the prophet, has to do, is to do what the Koran says, or the Sultan; and this he does with varying degrees of integrity, but not generally with any diabolical malice; often, however, without that decent moderation which armed strength is apt to forget, unless it is restrained by conscience, by cant, or by some power of seeing as the victim sees.

A SOUTH AMERICAN FESTA.—The chief amusements of festas consist in letting off crackers, getting drunk, and a certain mild kind of bull-fight. There are no professional toreros, and although as much as one dollar will be paid for a good place, the actors are all amateurs, often butchers, whose courage has been raised to the sticking point by an extra dose of rum. Neither do the bulls of Costa Rica seem to be a formidable species, and often an old cow is found the most game of the lot. On the other hand, there is little cruelty exercised, man and cow having pretty equal chances; the horns, it is true, are cut down, but no dogs or crackers, darts or banderrillas, are used. The most exciting event is to get a saddle on to the cow's back and then to mount her, a proceeding to which she seems to be furiously opposed. Neither are any horses sacrificed in the sport. The butcher bestrides one as he drives the bull or cow in the ring, and perhaps attempts to work him or her up to a little display of temper with his chuso or goad; but the horse has no other part in the fight. The animals are never killed in the arena; when no more fight can be got out of them they are lassoed and led out to make place for another. The costume worn on the occasion is a modification of the Spanish—a short jacket without waistcoat, a snow-white shirt confined at the waist by a red-silk sash-belt, a Panama hat, if one can be afforded, and trousers of very large check of bright colors, (the stuff made in England for the Costa Rica market, though never seen here,) the machete or sword-knife, the never failing companion of the Central American, dangling at his side.

IS LIFE ALL VANITY?

BY E. B. LYTTON.

Life answers me, if ended here be life,
Seize what the sense can give—it is thine all.
Disarm thee, Virtue—barren is thy strife;
Knowledge, thy torch let fall.

Seek thy lost Psyche, yearning Love, no more!
Love is but lost, if soul be only breath,
Who would put forth one billow from the shore,
If the great sea be—Death?

But if the Soul, that great artificer,
For ends its instinct rears from life, hath striven,
Feeling beneath its patient web-work stir,
Wings only freed in heaven—

Then, and but then, to toil is to be wise;
Solved is the riddle of the grand desire,
Which ever, ever for the distant sighs,
And must perforce aspire.

TIFF.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A GREAT MISTAKE,"
"ROSE OF THE WORLD," ETC.,
ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.—[CONTINUED.]

EVEN good-natured Florry, however, in the midst of her own myriad occupations, and with her own string of Platonic admirers on her hands, found time occasionally to throw a warning word to the girl.

"What is it all to lead to, you foolish child?" she would say.

"Quentin is delightful, agreeable, accomplished; but he has not a penny in the world.

"And you are shocking Brian more and more every day.

"It is so foolish of you!"

"But I shock Mr. Beaufoy by the mere fact of my existence, I am afraid," retorted the girl, with bright flushed cheeks and unnaturally shining eyes.

"When I was on my best behavior, he took pains to show me how seriously he disapproved of me.

"It is a pity I was ever born to be such an offence in his eyes.

"But, you see, here I am in the world, and I am afraid he must put up with me."

"Don't be absurd!" cried Florry.

"Here have I made up my mind that you two would fall in love with each other."

Ninon broke into a bitter laugh.

"And now you seem almost at daggers-drawn.

"And all because you will flirt with Quentin."

"But indeed I have never flirted with Quentin," declared Ninon, becoming suddenly grave.

"Well, because you are in love with him then—that is still worse, because it is more serious."

The girl uttered an impatient exclamation.

"I suppose it must be one or the other," declared Madame Du Mottay, perplexed, "or else you would pay a little more attention to my wishes, and to Brian's black looks.

"Come here, my child"—they were in Florry's dressing-room, and she was just putting the finishing strokes to her toilette for the evening—"let me see how you look in these diamonds."

She covered the girl's neck and arms with the flashing jewels.

She crowned her with them, hung them in her ears, pinned them like an order on the bosom of her white gown.

Ninon cried out with a kind of terror as she was led before the long glass and told to look at herself.

Her beauty seemed lit by some unearthly light.

The strange transparent pallor of her face shone amidst the glitter of the heaped-up jewels.

"Oh, take them off—take them off!" she said, putting her hands before her eyes.

"They make me feel so desperately wicked!"

Madame Du Mottay smiled indulgently.

"You would get so used to them," she said, "after a time that you would hardly know that you had them on, if it were not for the envious glances of other women!"

"They weigh me down!" pleaded Ninon piteously, beginning to unclasp the bracelets from her arms.

"And to think that you might wear stones as handsome, and go to Court and be called 'Mrs. Beaufoy,' if——"

"Florry!" the girl put her hand rapidly over her cousin's mouth, and her face grew stern.

"No more of that.

"I am ridiculous, contemptible, unwomanly enough already in Mr. Beaufoy's eyes—do not make me more so by such worse than idle talk."

She lay and sobbed for an hour in Tiffany's beloved little arms next day.

By some means or the other, in spite of her answer to Brian when he had questioned her—she contrived to see her little sister every morning before the tired-out world of the Priory was awake.

Sometimes she came looking so worn and weak and dispirited that Tiffany was frightened.

But Ninon declared that she was very well, very happy, that all she wanted was her little Tiff.

"I am coming back soon, dear, you know," she told her that day, as soon as her passion of tears had sobbed itself away in the little bed-room where they locked themselves in.

"There is the ball still to come off, and after that all these people are to go.

"I think Florry Du Mottay will not stay much longer herself in England.

"And when she is gone——"

"Ninon," said Tiffany anxiously, "do you think that they will ask mother to the ball?"

"Nothing less likely, I should say"—with a little laugh.

Tiff's face fell.

"Oh, I hope they will!" she cried.

"Mother has so set her heart on it.

"She has talked of nothing else.

"Indeed all Marybridge is talking about it, I think."

Ninon shrugged her shoulders, and declared that it was time for her to go back.

Mrs. Masserene's expectations were of small importance in her eyes.

But her step-mother believed that the moment had at last arrived to convince her—Mrs. Masserene's—somewhat incredulous friends of her intimacy with the family at the Priory.

If she went to this ball, her name would be in the local paper the next day.

She told herself that she had not asked much of these fine relatives of Ninon, but that she was resolved to get so much out of them at least.

Ninon was very disagreeably surprised one day to receive a visit from her step-mother at the Priory.

Mrs. Masserene announced in very plain terms that, unless she received a card in due time for Madame Du Mottay's ball, she should insist on her step-daughter's return to Laurel Lodge.

"But I have nothing whatever to do with the invitations," answered Ninon coldly—Mrs. Masserene's loud voice always sounded louder than ever after she had lived away from her and among refined surroundings for a time.

"That's not my business," declared her step-mother.

"I dare say you can get what you like out of Madame Du Mottay.

"All I say is that, if I'm not invited to the ball, you don't go to it, either, and you come home at once.

"I have put up with your relations' impudence quite long enough.

"I am not going to stand it any longer."

Ninon, in despair, went to Madame Du Mottay and told her the plain truth.

Florry laughed, and bade her not trouble her head about Mrs. Masserene's threats.

"Does she think we are children to be frightened by what she says?" she demanded scornfully.

"And how does she intend to carry you off?

"I shall certainly not spoil my pretty ball by introducing any such incongruous and impossible element as your stepmother.

"My dear child, you must really be good, stop flirting, and marry.

"There is no possible escape for you but that."

"After all," said Ninon, with a bitter smile, "in degree is my step-mother more vulgar in her desires than I am?

"She would like to ape her betters—so do I.

"She hankers after fine society—so do I.

"She——"

"Spare me the rest, my dear child!" cried Florry, with an impatient little laugh.

"The cases are not parallel at all.

"You are in your own world here.

"It is when you go back to Laurel Lodge that you are out of your element.

"No more mock humility, if you please, Miss Masserene; but do me the pleasure to go and make yourself beautiful for dinner."

Ninon turned away without another word.

Her heart was like lead within her bosom.

A sickening sense of weariness, of disgust of her existence, of self-contempt, came upon her.

She went to her room and impatiently put aside all the graceful white splendors that Madame Du Mottay's maid had laid out for her for the evening.

Among her many toilettes from the Rue de la Paix was an experiment of Mr. Worth's for the beautiful Miss Masserene which was entirely of black, and severely simple.

She seized upon this now with a curious satisfaction and put it on.

She looked like some fair and fabulous figure of snow in her sombre trailing raiment.

Florry cried out in childish admiration of the beautiful unhappy-looking young creature.

"Whether it is coquetry or accident," she said, "you never looked lovelier.

"But—I have an idea!

"Come back! Come back!

"Adele, open me that window, and lean out and gather me an armful of the passion-flowers that climb against the wall!

"Stand still, Ninon!

"I say you shall not go away.

"There!"—pressing her down into a chair before the long glass, and eagerly seizing the great trails of leaves and purple flowers from the hands of her maid.

"A coil round your throat—what splendid stars they make for your beautiful southern Night!—a mass on your shoulders; twist it round the arm of mademoiselle, Adele!

"Take down her hair—my child, resistance is useless.

"No one has ever seen your hair loosened yet; they shall have that delight for once.

"Pin the long trails in it, through it, over it!"

"Hang them from her ears!

"That silver wire will keep the flowers in their place.

"There!

"There is absolutely no place for any more, and so I pause for breath!

"Ninon, you are adorable!

"Stand up and look at yourself, and tell me whether the woman you see in the glass was meant to live and die in Marybridge, or whether she is not worthy of an entree to every European Court, whether she was not born to be a delight to the eyes of kings and princes!"

Ninon's lips began to tremble as she looked.

Was that Tiffany's sister?

Was that Richard Strong's promised wife, that pale fantastic image in the glass?

A sudden recollection flashed across her of the pleasant drawing-room at Barnes, of Dick's mother knitting by the fire, of Mary reading aloud, with old Bevis asleep on the hem of her simple gown.

If those two sweet and good women could see her now!

She broke into a little laugh, and turned away.

"I believe you have discovered my reason," she said bitterly.

"I was meant to be a milliner's block, to be dressed and redressed and display the latest extravagance to the best advantage!

"I really think, myself, that I look very well to-night.

"A little theatrical perhaps; but then that is my style always!"

"Go away!" said Madame Du Mottay severely.

"That tragic mood suits your passion-flowers to perfection.

"Please to go on being miserable all the evening.

"A smile would spoil everything."

Ninon obeyed; and, as she went downstairs into the drawing-room, her face was wretched enough to have satisfied her volatile little cousin.

"What does it matter?" she said to herself.

"Who cares what I feel, so long as I look like a French doll and smile to order?

"Did I not say that I would be happy for a month?

"And what is the use of thinking now of what I might have done and might have been?

"I am what I am and what I always shall be.

"It is not worth while trying to be anything else."

As she went along the dimly-lit oaken corridor, she met Brian.

She moved so noiselessly long down that he did not see her until she came close to him, and then he stopped abruptly and looked at her, turning a little pale.

He was so used to seeing her in white that it was with a kind of shock he saw her now, her black hair falling on her black dress, her eyes shining out of her transparently pallid face, the great purple stars of the passion-flower crowning her and clinging to her amid their trails of dark green foliage.

The girl made a deprecating gesture at sight of his cold face.

"Scold Florry, not me!" she said nervously.

"She insisted on tricking me out like a drawing-room Ophelia!"

He merely bowed, and drew aside for her to pass.

Ninon flushed piteously as she walked by and down the stairs, and so across the hall into the drawing-room.

"I am not even worth scolding," she thought.

"Mr. Beaufoy's disapprobation is altogether too deep and too wide for that.

"He does not care to see so theatrical an apparition in his drawing-room.

"But I, on the other hand, am determined not to spare him a single passion-flower out of my crown.

"He must put up with them all, and with me for a little longer; it will be such a little while now!"

And it is certain that Mr. Beaufoy was the only man who was able to look with indifference on Miss Masserene's perfect beauty that evening.

The girl was in a strange mood, defiant, wayward, and too much intoxicated by her triumph to be unhappy, even with Brian's eyes upon her.

As the women gathered round her after dinner, she called to them gaily to follow her example, and devote themselves for one night to the queen of flowers.

In a few moments they had all gone out on to the terrace and down through the dusky garden alleys, and were despoiling the bushes and trees of their blossoms.

A pretty girl in white came running back all decked with clematis; Florry Du Mottay covered herself with red carnations; there was a gray sylph smothered in pink asters, a brown one in yellow dahlias; the terrace was alive with merry voices, with glancing colors as the moon began to rise behind the trees, with the music of a waltz that Quentin was playing for the charming animated flowers.

Miss Masserene was besieged by eager request for a dance.

But she cut them all, and, when presently Madame Du Mottay took Quentin's place at the piano, and he came out into the jasmine-scented moonlight, he found Ninon sitting apart, somewhat in the shadow of the terrace wall.

She smiled as he drew near, and turned upon him a glance so resplendent that it seemed to silence the words that rose to his lips.

With the purple star-flowers in her hair and the black sheen of her gown setting off her fair white form, she looked a creature apart from the women among whom she sat.

Meeting his gaze, the girl was conscious of a strange sensation.

A curious exultant sense of power was blent with as curious a sense of helplessness and shrinking.

It was as though Quentin had said aloud, and before all the world, "Why should we struggle any longer?"

A swift thought flashed across her of what her life might have been if she had met Quentin earlier.

She remembered, when he had come to the Priory, how her first sensation had been one of disappointment that Brian Beaufoy should look and move and talk as he did: then how she had grown to like him better, how she had missed him when he went away, and how, now that they had met again, she found in his society the surest anodyne for that constant anguish of self-reproach which possessed her night and day.

How was it possible to resist the attraction she felt towards him?

What other man had shown so complete an indifference when by her side to everything and every one but her?

And, even though it all must end, though he was bound by other ties, Ninon was grateful for the devotion he had not been ashamed to lavish on her in the face of all the world, for the audacity with which for her sake he had risked his chances of advancement in life, content, as she herself had been content, to play his summer-dream of happiness, of passion, out, and not to look beyond the day that found them still together.

"You do not care to dance," he said at last, more in the tone of an assertion than a question.

"Walk with me for a few minutes in the moonlight."

She hesitated.

A look of pain, of entreaty came into his face as he bent over her.

"Give me five minutes," he urged.

"Are you afraid?"

"Of you!"

She stood up, and put a trembling hand within his arm.

"And surely, dear, of no one else?"

"Of no one else," she echoed faintly, for as he pressed her hand against his side, the edge of Dick's ring hurt her tender flesh.

"I will give you five minutes.

"That is not much to ask."

"There is time enough in five minutes to make or mar the happiness of a life—of two lives."

Ninon shivered a little in the warm night air.

She looked back hurriedly to the lit-up windows of the long drawing-room, to the flitting figures on the terrace.

She felt suddenly as if she were miles away from every one, as if she were alone on a desert island with Quentin.

What was he going to say?

Would she too be obliged to speak and send him from her?

A curious, jealous pain shot through her.

She did not want to lose his love; she did not want to put it away; and yet——

"Why do you turn back?" asked Quentin hurriedly.

"Brian is not looking after us."

He felt her start.

The hand on his arm was half withdrawn.

Then she controlled herself, and broke into a laugh.

"Mr. Beaufoy has long since given up that unprofitable employment," she said recklessly.

"And you and I have long since been looked upon by all the world as incorrigible."

"You see how impossible it is to think of us apart!" whispered Quentin.

"Oh, what a night!" cried Ninon softly.

"How all my poor masquerade of splendor fades into insignificance under such a sky!"

"But I cannot see the stars for looking at the passion-flowers round your throat."

"Quentin!" she laughed again nervously.

"No madrigals, if you please.

"This is not a pastoral comedy; but a scene from real life—prosy, matter-of-fact real life.

"Let me make sure of that!" answered the young man, suddenly standing still.

"I ask nothing better than to find that I am not dreaming, that the joy I feel in walking here with you will last for life——"

"Oh, pray, pray," protested the girl, "pray don't be serious, Quentin!

"I prefer the pastoral to that.

"There!"—she waved her pretty hand.

"The scene is changed again; we are not Quentin Beaufoy and Ninon Masserene any more, but Mistral's pretty pair of lovers sowing their moon-wheat——"

"Their moon-wheat?"

"Yes.

"'Sowing one's moon-wheat' is Provencal for flirting, Mr. Beaufoy.

"And I am afraid that is what Florry will accuse us of if we stay out much longer."

She would have turned back towards the house; but he caught her hand and prevented her.

"Stay, Ninon!" he said, huskily.

"You must not go until you have heard what I have to say."

"No, no, no!" she pleaded, trying vainly to release her hand from his passionate clasp.

"Oh, Quentin, say nothing—let me go—I will not listen to you!"

There was no mistaking the young man's manner.

And, frightened, moved, penitent as she felt, the girl was hardly displeased to find that his feeling for her was even deeper and stronger than she had believed it to be.

"It is easy to say that now," he went on, in a low and shaken voice; "but you know that it is too late!"

"Quentin, do not say any more, I beg of you."

"You forbade me, on the night I came back, to speak of the past.

"You demanded of me that I should be towards you as though we had no sweet memories in common, as though I had never felt for you what no other woman has had the power to make me feel, what I shall feel for you, Ninon, as long as I live."

"Yes," the girl broke in hurriedly, "I asked that of you; I ask it still of you, Quentin.

"I did not think you could misunderstand me so terribly. I——"

"Do I blame you?" he answered, still holding close the little trembling, struggling hand.

"I have learned from you what life means when lived with such a woman as you are—its sweetness, its pains—all that can lift it above the commonplace existence of those people over there"—nodding towards the lit-up house.

"Do you think I would take back, for all the world could offer me, the hours that you and I have spent together?"

"Quentin! It was a jest—a play—you know it was.

"Forget it all."

"Yes; it was a jest perhaps at first; but now——

"Ninon, for Heaven's sake, answer me! I will not believe that you can leave me without an answer."

"I must," she panted; "or, if I answer you, it must be to give you pain—such pain as I have had to bear for many a day."

"I can bear anything for you!" declared Quentin, in a hoarse whisper. "Ninon your pain is my pain. Speak to me that I may prove to you how little I regard whatever obstacles may stand between us. Good Heaven, what is there that need seperate us, child? Don't you know that

"'Men have died trying to find this place which we have found?'"

"Quentin, do you know that you are speaking wildly, madly?" the girl urged, breaking at last from his grasp.

"Do you forget your promise—your engagement? You are not free—you know you are not free!"

"Yes," he answered quickly, "I am free. I have been free for some time. Do you think I would have ever looked upon your face again if I had not been free? My engagement is at an end."

Ninon broke into a low cry of pain.

"No, no," she said—"not at an end through me."

"I tell you I am free. Ninon, you will be my wife?"

She covered her stricken face with her hands. She could not bear to meet his eyes.

"Quentin," she said, "I did not know. Forgive me. I thought that you were bound as well as I. Oh, what have I done?"

"Bound—as well as you?" the young man echoed hoarsely. "You then are——"

"I am engaged. Yes. I cannot tell you more than that."

"And,"—Quentin seized her slender wrist and turned her face round that he might read it in the moonlight—"you—love this other man?"

"I will marry him," she answered, wretchedly; and he let her go.

"Quentin," she said, as he turned from her.

"No"—he shook his head, "Don't speak to me just yet. I cannot bear it!"

And he walked away down a dusky sidewalk, leaving Ninon alone in the moonlight.

CHAPTER XXV.

NINON went back to the house, and into the drawing-room, looking like a ghost, and feeling as if the unnatural tension of her nerves was almost more than she could bear.

The purple flowers were drooping round her white throat, her long hair hung, dense and heavy from the night-dews, on her shoulder.

A dozen eager voices hailed her as she came in through the open window.

They were all discussing the ball, and nothing could be decided, it apppeared without an appeal to Miss Masserene.

The girl sank into the chair which some one wheeled forward, and broke into a little laugh that sounded like a sob.

"The ball by all means!" she said. "I feel at present that there is nothing else worth living for!"

As she spoke, she looked round and met Mr. Beaufoy's eyes, which were fixed on her with their usual expression of grave disapproval.

"Mr. Beaufoy's sarcastic smile," she said recklessly, "reminds me of poor Gillian in the picture-gallery, who has been under the ban for a century and more of Denis Beaufoy's disapprobation.

"I think, Florry, I will wear a white satin sacque and a striped carnation in my hair at the ball, since you all say I am so like her."

"The likeness is not a happy one, child," cried Madame Du Mottay, with a French little gesture.

"Mistress Gillian was a coquette. She set two brothers of the house by the ears. It is no wonder Colonel Denis looks at her with such a sinister smile. No doubt he had a presentiment while he was being painted that he should one day fight a duel for her sake with a fine gentleman of the Court, and that he should die of the wounds he received."

Ninon turned white to the lips.

"That is her history?" she said, with another nervous laugh.

"It is not a pretty one certainly. But all these things happened long ago, before the world had fallen into this long, long doze from which it seems so impossible to rouse it. Who cares enough for any woman nowadays to fight for her? Which of us indeed is worth fighting for?"

Madame Du Mottay exclaimed in a pretty protest.

The young men began to make complimentary speeches to the beautiful Miss Masserene, in the midst of which Quentin came in.

Ninon started nervously at sight of him, but the young man appeared perfectly composed, and walked straight over to her side as he had fallen into a way of doing.

People had ceased to remark upon it even and quite instinctively the young Squire, who was nearest to Miss Masserene, moved a little to one side to make more room for Quentin.

Quentin as quietly dispossessed him of his chair.

"You don't mind for a minute?" he said. "There is something I wanted to say to my cousin."

Ninon felt that her heart was beating faster.

What did it mean, war or peace—this quiet resumption, after the scene in the garden, of their wonted intimacy?

"Pray don't interrupt us," she said, as lightly as she could.

"We are discussing a subject of the deepest importance in the ball."

"And Mistress Gillian Beaufoy's biography," added Florry.

"Imagine, Quentin! This crazy child wants to bring her to life again on the twenty-seventh. For my part, I should not care to be haunted even by so pretty a ghost as Ninon would make in her white satin sacque."

"Then mind how you pass through the picture-gallery alone at midnight," said Quentin carelessly.

"It is well that it is haunted.

"What would you say if I told you that I myself had seen Gillian's phantom walking there?"

"Don't!" cried Florry, with a shudder.

The girls began to exclaim, Ninon's pale face to burn with a sudden blush.

Was it war, after all?

Was he resolved never to forgive her for what she had done?

Every one was surrounding Quentin and assailing him with eager questions.

Mr. Beaufoy's cool gaze had detected some intention in his brother's speech, some cause for Ninon's sudden and evident confusion.

An impulse for which he could hardly account impelled him to go to her assistance little as she deserved any consideration.

"But not really, Mr. Quentin!"

"When did you see the ghost?"

"Did you speak to it!"

"Did it stay long?"

"I don't believe in ghosts."

"I do believe in ghosts."

The clamor of pretty voices was still eagerly questioning Quentin.

His eyes were fixed moodily on Ninon's disturbed face.

"I can tell you nothing now," he answered rather curtly, but with a laugh that sent a thrill of fear to the girl's heart. "Ask Miss Masserene: I believe it was she who disturbed Mistress Gillian's hundred-year-long sleep.

"She was the ghost as well as I."

"Oh, Miss Masserene, did you? Oh, pray do tell us all about it!"

The voices and eager pretty faces turned to Ninon now.

She lost her presence of mind.

She could only think of the menace in Quentin's laugh.

Did he indeed mean to reveal to his brother that escapade of which the very thought now made her ears burn and her lips parch?

"I am sorry to disappoint you all of a ghost-story," interposed Mr. Beaufoy, smiling coldly.

"But I am afraid my brother only means to be complimentary to our cousin after a somewhat roundabout fashion. I believe any of us who should meet Ninon in the picture-gallery on the stroke of twelve, or at any other appropriately weird hour, would have little difficulty in believing that it was Mistress Gillian herself descended from her frame.

"There are other heirlooms in our family besides the diamonds and lace, and Miss Masserene has inherited her face from our fair cousin whose history we have just been discussing."

"A most elaborate explanation of my innocent joke!" declared Quentin, with another laugh.

Ninon raised her eyes in speechless gratitude to Brian's quiet face.

It was the first time since she had been under his roof that he had called her by her name.

Her eyes were full of tears.

Her lips quivered too much to allow her to speak.

Brian had turned away, besides, and was asking some one to sing.

Under cover of the music the girl rose and went out of the room, and up the dusky stairs to her own chamber, the door of which she locked behind her.

With quick disgust she tore off the masses of foliage and flowers in which she was draped, and gathered the loose wealth of her hair into a knot, pushing it all away impatiently behind her ears.

Her veins were throbbing horribly.

The momentary pleasure she had felt in Brian's protection was swallowed up in the misery, the shame, the remorse caused by Quentin's confession, and the knowledge that for her he had broken his engagement.

Alone there, all the factitious excitement of the evening dying frostily out of her veins and leaving her utterly cast down and dejected, Ninon spent a miserable half-hour with her conscience, which brought before her in uncompromising clearness her wrongs towards the man whose promised wife she was, towards Quentin, whom she had allowed from the first to assume an attitude towards her which it was her womanly duty to have prevented, towards Tiffany, who was suffering loneliness and neglect that she might snatch a few weeks of an existence she professed to despise, but for which—for its gaieties, its vanities, its follies—she had sacrificed all that she should have held most dear.

She did not spare herself as she sat before her glass, staring into it with unseeing eyes, her hands clenched on her lap, and her pale lips parted.

She told herself the truth; and the truth was bad enough.

How should she ever look Dick in the face when he came back?

She had been afraid even to meet his mother and Mary; and what would it be when he himself came home, his heart beating with an honest love, believing in her, looking to her for the happiness of his whole life to come?

What had she done with it?

What had become of her promise, her good resolutions, her desire to make herself worthy of him and the sweet women between whom and their happiness she had thrust herself rather than let one heart go?

His mother's words came back to her, and the gentle touch of her kind hand upon his hair.

"Let your influence be for good, Ninon!"

The girl uttered an inarticulate sound that was almost a sob.

What had her influence been upon Dick, upon Quentin, upon Brian even, whose contempt she had brought upon herself by her restless conduct during the past few weeks?

Perhaps there was no especial action that she had cause to be ashamed of; but was her life at the Priory one that she would care to live under the eyes of Mrs. Strong? Could she assert truthfully that she had not been deeply to blame in her relations with Quentin?

It was useless to try to persuade herself that the blame was his, that he had been engaged as well as she when they met, and that he should have understood the ephemeral nature of their flirtation. Had it been only a flirtation?

Had she not seen day by day how it was growing into something more serious, more compromising?

"Let your influence be for good!"

And Quentin would go away, hating her very name, feeling his faith in all womanhood shaken perhaps, because one woman had looked and acted a falsehood with him because she had not had the strength to turn from a temporary means of forgetting her own pain, but had chosen to snatch wildly at the intoxicating pleasure of a conquest, of a man's half-reluctant fascination, heedless of what she might cause to him and to others——

To Dick!

As the thought of her absent lover came back again, the girl stood up, uttering a smothered sound of pain.

"What shall I do?" she moaned between her clenched teeth.

"I cannot marry him—I cannot! It would be better to do anything than that! It would be better—to give him up!"

A wild light began to burn in her great blue eyes.

"To give him up!" she repeated breathlessly.

"To break my word, to take back my promise, to prove to him that all this summer's work was not the thoughtless work of an unhappy girl left too much to herself, and surrounded by temptation and evil influences, but the deliberate design of a coquette, a flirt, a jilt!"

Ah, those were not pretty names to be called certainly! But, after all, she would not be the first girl who had given a rash promise which she found impossible to fulfil, who had changed her mind—why, it happened every day! And would it not be more honest to say to Dick, "I cannot marry you, I do not love you; I thought I did, but now I know that I do not, and I cannot marry you," than to become his wife reluctantly, conscious that she could never make him happy?

Ninon began to pace restlessly up and down her luxurious bed-room as she was thinking all this.

What would she not have given to be able to believe in her own argument—to be sure that the real wrong to Dick would be not to forsake him, but to remain constant?

But she could not convince herself of this.

Even while she was reminding herself that girls jilted their lovers every day in the week, and were thought none the worse of for so doing, the recollection came back to her of her earliest meeting with Dick, of their life together in Paris and at Dinard, of his struggles to free himself from her influence, and of her reluctance to let him go.

She had wanted to keep his love, as she had wanted to keep Quentin's, at no cost to herself.

She had wanted to take his devotion, his sacrifices, his passion, and give nothing in return.

And, when he rebelled and would have left her, she never rested until he had come back to her again, to be again cajoled and twisted round her finger.

She remembered the last night of all—how sad he had been, poor fellow, and how hard he had tried to hide it from her, and to go, as became a man, without any further useless appeal to the invulnerable heart of a coquette.

She saw his patient face, his melancholy smile, the sudden trembling of his sunburnt hands.

"No, no, no!" the girl cried, breaking into a passion of tears. "I have done him wrong enough.

"I am not worthy of his love, but at least I will keep my word at all hazards. He is coming home to marry me, and I will be his wife.

"So long as he is happy, what does anything else matter? As for me have I not always said that I was not born to be happy?

"I think I like money, or what it brings, better than anything in the world; and yet, though I am surrounded by all that I most desire—luxury, admiration, consideration—I am not less wretched than in my step-mother's house, with Mr. Meliadew's pompous compliments to set my teeth on edge and a vulgar shrew to rule my life and Tiffany's.

"What does it all matter?

"In a few years, more or less, we shall all be in our graves and there, I suppose, there will be rest at least!"

She paused in her walk, feeling suddenly tired and faint. The struggle was over.

She knew very well that she should never break from the bondage in which her engagement held her, that to do so would be to leave behind her every vestige of self-respect.

And yet she was not the less convinced that nothing but suffering lay before her.

"Suffering for me, but not for Dick," she said, with a sigh. "I have been mad and thoughtless enough; but there are some things that are impossible even for me. And that is one of them.

"I will die rather than break my word to him!"

As she spoke, she heard a knock at the door. It was Madame Du Mottay's maid, who had brought her a note.

"One of the grooms brought it from the village, mademoiselle," she explained. "The young lady threw it over the wall."

"It must be from Tiff, of course," said Ninon, with another uneasy twinge of conscience.

"Poor child, I could not find time to go and see her to-day or yesterday."

The maid was gone.

Miss Masserene opened the letter.

"Dear," it said, "don't be uneasy about me. Mother has just told me that I am to go and stay with some of her relatives. I don't know where they live. She will not let me say good-bye to you before we start; but I have written this, and I am going to watch for some one to take it to the Priory. The horses and grooms are always passing along the Marybridge road. Don't be unhappy about me, darling; I will write to you by hook or crook, and let you know where I am. So good-bye, and heaven bless you, from your little "TIFF."

The little hasty scrawl fell from Ninon's hand on to the floor, and she put her hand quickly to her heart.

"Tiffany has been taken away," she said stupidly, "while I was dressed up in those flowers and let Quentin talk love to me. It is my punishment beginning at last!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

EARLY the next morning, and long before any one was stirring at the Priory, Ninon was up and dressed, and was walking swiftly through the park to the lodge.

All night long she had lain awake trying vainly to discover a reason for this sudden action on the part of her step-mother, but she could conceive of none. But she told herself bitterly, as she passed the gates and got out into the sunny high-road, that, if she had been at home, this thing could not have happened, or, at least, where Tiffany went she would have gone too.

And now what was she to do? If Mrs. Masserene refused to tell her where the child was hidden, it was certain that she would take every precaution to prevent Tiff from communicating with her; and what could Tiff do, all by herself and friendless, in the teeth of her mother's orders?

The girl walked on feverishly, all her personal troubles of the previous night well-nigh forgotten in this new and unexpected misery.

Oh, why had she been false to the little sister who had no one but her in all the world? Ninon felt in her wretchedness as if she had sold the child into slavery, and that all her empty joys and dissipation of the past month had been bought at the price of Tiffany's tears.

And she was so helpless! She felt a sudden sense of her utter loneliness in the world. To which of the people in the great house she had left could she turn for aid in her trouble?

Not to Madame Du Mottay, who would object to her reddened eyelids, and who, in spite of her good nature, Ninon was perfectly conscious, had known too little pain in her life as petted daughter, sister, and wife to be able to feel much for others, or help them in their hours of distress.

Not to Mr. Beaufoy—the girl's pale cheeks flushed at the very thought of appealing to Brian, who would have the right to tell her that she had brought all this trouble on herself, and that it in no wise concerned him, of whose tastes and wishes she had always been so conspicuously defiant, even while under his roof.

Not to Quentin, who alone perhaps of her three cousins would have been willing to listen to her and bring her what consolation and assistance there lay in his power. She had lost all claim upon his regard. All confidence was at an end between them.

And, if her own relatives were indifferent to her misery and unable or reluctant to help her, how could she turn to those who, but for her own perverse folly, might have befriended her now—to Mrs. Strong and Mary Hawthorn, the two kind woman to whom her lover had commended her with so many fond entreaties when he went away.

No; the girl felt that she stood alone in her pain, as she had chosen to stand alone in her pleasures. She deserved no pity, and yet she shrank from the cutting conviction that she would not receive any, least of all from her step-mother.

Her heart began to beat to suffocation as she drew near the gate of Laurel Lodge. She could hardly realize that there was no little Tiff looking out of there bed-room window to watch for her on the sunny road and to run down and meet her at the door with a fond welcome and the clasp of two tender adoring arms round her neck.

"She looked out yesterday and the day before, and did not see me," thought the girl, with a bitter smile.

"But that did not matter, since it was only she who was disappointed. To-day it is my turn; only it seems that I must always make some one suffer with me. I could not even spare little Tiff, who is forgiving me and loving me how, wherever she is!"

And so at last she reached the house.

Her step-mother was at breakfast, the maid told her, who opened the door. Ninon eagerly questioned the servant as to the journey of the previous day—at what hour Miss Tiffany had gone away, whether Mrs. Masserene had accompanied her, and at what hour she had returned.

It appeared that the journey had not been a long one, since her step-mother had been absent only a few hours. Further than this, the housemaid, who adored Ninon, as all servants invariably did, could give the young lady no information.

And then she opened the door of the small dining-room, and Miss Masserene went in, pale and nervous, to her interview.

"Bless me!" said the step-mother with a sneer. "To what are we indebted for the honor of such an early visit? You must really please to excuse me. You've caught me in all my dishabille."

The lady was indeed dressed in a dirty wrapper and cap to match, and the appointments of the breakfast table were not particularly appetising.

Mrs. Masserene, when alone, was apt to dispense with ceremony, and to snatch her meals as best she could, in a fashion that had been familiar to her in her hard-work ing days, and of which she had never entirely divested herself.

Even in the midst of anxiety, Ninon turned sick at the thought of the contrast between the scene before and the breakfast room at the Priory, where she would be missing this morning from among the fair faces and fresh toilettes and the pleasant talk and laughter.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

WON AT LAST..

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A GREAT MISTAKE;" "A WEAK WOMAN," "RED RIDING-HOOD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER II.—[CONTINUED.]

"DEAR, dear, Miss Madge, what a queer place to be sure!" exclaimed Mrs. Rennet.

"But I am so glad to be in it once more!" cried Madge, enthusiastically clasping her pretty hands.

She had on Jack's favorite gray gown; her sweet gray eyes were full of a happy light.

"We were so contented here, though we were so poor."

"Indeed, my dear, and money does not always bring contentment," declared the housekeeper.

"But, Miss Madge, you can't stop here. We shall have to find rooms for ourselves at once."

"Yes, I know," returned Madge, coloring; "I intend to ask Mrs. Warrington to take us for the present."

"But first I must see Jack—Mr. Beamish. He is so unhappy. Every one has been so unkind to him."

"Indeed, then, and that is what Mr. Beamish does not deserve," declared Mrs. Rennet.

"And least of all from me, who should have known how to read that noblest, tenderest of hearts.

"But I have been as blind until now as all the rest."

The girl paused rather suddenly and turned with a pretty impulse to the old housekeeper.

"You do not think I am too bold, do you, dear old Rennet?" she asked, blushing again.

"You do not think that Mr. Beamish could possibly misunderstand my presence here?"

"No, no, my dear, no," answered the old housekeeper, with a reassuring pat on the girl's shoulder.

"If he is in trouble, where else should you be but here?"

"Yes," replied Madge, eagerly, "that is what I feel.

"And when I have explained why I came, we can go to Mrs. Warrington's at once, so that he cannot think, he ought not to suppose——"

The girl was blushing more really with every word; but she checked herself, and began to look about the room.

"The room is dreadfully untidy, Mrs. Rennet," she said brightly, "and that will never do now that Jack is at home. Suppose we put it in order?"

Mrs. Rennet would have had the young lady sit down while she herself swept and dusted the studio. But this Madge would not think of.

"See—there is his picture! Quick, dear old Rennet, help me lift it down. Now let us put it on the easel—so."

She ran for a cloth, and lovingly dusted the canvas.

"See how the colors glow now that the dust is thoroughly brushed off!" she said eagerly.

"And it is months and months since he laid a brush on it—months of patient self-denial and devotion, of loneliness and misjudged suffering.

"Forgive me Jack"—her voice sank to a whisper, and, forgetting Mrs. Rennet's presence, the girl put her arm across the picture and touched it with her lips—"forgive me! I was indeed blind. I did not know!"

"No, don't you fret, my dear," said good old Rennet, who was still bustling about the room.

"That is all over now, and Mr. Beamish will be as happy now, and as famous one of these day, as he deserves to be."

Madge started back, blushing, from the picture.

"Yes; pray heaven," she said, fervently, "we will not misunderstand him any more."

She took a final survey of the greatly changed room, which was swept and garnished.

A fire was burning brightly, and the table was spread for supper.

"It looks so snug, Mrs. Rennet," she said, gratefully.

"Jack always says that a fire in a room is like a river in a landscape; and I think a kettle adds considerably to the effect at times.

"You and I will want some tea, you know; though Mr. Beamish will probably prefer some beer"

The girl filled a kettle and put it on the fire.

"Wonder if Lady Blanchmayne ever saw any such thing as a kettle in her life!" she cried.

"I am a little inclined to believe that her ladyship would faint if she saw me with it in my hand.

"There—everything is ready, and your basket of good things unpacked.

"And now Jack may come as soon as he likes.

"He will not expect such a banquet nor such agreeable society, will he, Mrs. Rennet?"

"And now I will show you the little bedroom where I used to sleep; and you shall put on that splendid cap which I know you have brought with you, and be ready to pour out tea as soon as Mr. Beamish returns."

"Dear, dear," said Mrs. Rennet, at the door of the little bedroom, "you will have your own way, I know; and indeed I shall feel more like myself when I get my cap on."

All Madge's feverish gaiety forsook her as soon as she was alone.

She seemed to turn suddenly pale and nervous.

"He cannot be much longer," she was thinking, as she sat in the red glow of the fire at her work-basket, which she had drawn close to the hearth.

"Oh, how my heart beats! I wont light the lamps just yet; it will be easier to speak to him in the dusk.

"But what shall I say? Now that I am here my courage fails me.

"I am afraid I have been foolish and—rash.

"Better Jack should never know what I came here to tell him than that I should sink one hair's breadth from the sacred place his little Madge of old days now holds in his thoughts.

"Better that I should go away and be forgotten.

"Oh"—the girl held her breath, nervously listening—"there he is; that is his step and oh, how dull, and slow, and spiritless it sounds!"

She turned her face away from the door, and bent tremblingly over her work as Jack entered.

The poor fellow looked round, puzzled at the sudden transformation that had been wrought in the room, at the supper-table, the fire, the bending figure by the hearth, and he believed that he had, in his absence of mind, mistaken the floor—gone down stairs from Freddy's room instead of going up.

"I beg your pardon, really," he said to the young lady at the fire. I didn't mean to intrude."

The young lady turned, smiling and pale.

"Madge!" he cried, rushing to her and looking into her face to make sure that it was really she.

"Why, child what are you doing in this place?"

Madge hung her head, with that same smile on her face.

"I am mending the stockings, Jack," she answered. "They need it."

"You have come back!" cried the poor fellow, wildly.

"It is really you; in your pretty gray gown of the old days, too!

"You little witch! Well, I see you have been waving your wand about the room already.

"Only a broomstick, Jack. That is the proper thing for a witch!"

"You darling child!"

He caught both her hands, stockings and all, in his.

"Are you sure I am not dreaming? Have we really been away all this time—all this long, miserable time?"

Madge drew her hands away.

"You must have been somewhere, sir," she said demurely, "to learn such extravagant habits.

She stood up as she spoke, and brought the old blue blouse from the chair before Jack's easel.

"Are you going to wear that coat in the house—a beautiful new coat that you have only had for five years?"

Jack's haggard face lit up with returning joy.

"Yes, it is she—her very little self," he cried, "come back to scold me a little and to keep everything in order!"

He changed his coat obediently, with the girl's assistance.

"There, then, madam, I hope you are satisfied now, and prepared to tell me the meaning of this delightful little apparition on my hearth."

Madge was getting a little flurried.

"Of course," she said, "when I have made the tea, and——"

"The kettle is not boiling yet," said Jack, calmly.

"Where have you been, Miss Hesketh, that you have grown so aristocratic and forgotten the rudiments of an art in which you used to excel?"

"Where I should never have dreamt of going," answered the girl, in a broken voice—"where no one wants me any longer—where I will never, never go again."

"Madge!"

"Yes, I will speak now," she said, desperately. "Before I go away I will tell you everything.

"Jack"—her breath came faster and her lips quivered—"everything is at an end between Noel and me."

"No, no!" replied Jack.

But she went on rapidly:

"I have left Woodsdown for ever. I have come to London to try to procure a situation.

"I could teach little children, perhaps, or give music-lessons, and sometimes I can see you all—Mr. Warrington, and Freddy, and Sebastian——"

Jack's heart was swelling with indignation.

"Did that man consent then," he asked, in a low voice, "to your coming to London alone on such business?"

"Oh, hush!" pleaded Madge; "he did not know of it.

"I could not see him after—after poor old Van's death and your going away. But nothing he could have said, even if he had cared to say such words, would have kept me in that house another day.

"There is certainly no room for me in it any longer."

"Good heaven," cried Jack, "that it should come to this!"

"It is no such hard fate, after all," continued Madge, smiling.

"I have good friends still, and—and my big brother Jack to look after me now and then.

"Many a poor girl has to go out into the world and earn her bread without any such consolation and support."

Jack looked at her with all his yearning heart in his eyes.

"Poor child," he said, "how will your tender little hands serve for that struggle with the cruel thing you call the world? Your gentle heart will break itself against its hard indifference and scorn.

"Madge"—he drew a little closer, his voice sank—"why should you talk of earning your own bread? You can trust me, can't you?"

"Trust you!"

"Then why"—with increasing agitation—"may it not be my pride and my joy to make a home for you, my dear—a home which would be humble enough, no doubt, for a while at least, but where you would be sheltered from everything that could harm or hurt you."

"Jack!"

"I know that I am selfish to talk like this so soon," he went on; "but the thought of my little girl in London all alone is more than I can bear—the thought of your frail little feet struggling through wind, rain and snow day after day to earn the miserable pittance that will barely keep body and soul together—of the hardships you must endure, and the insults your beauty will bring upon you.

"Oh, Madge"—Jack bent lower and lower over the beloved little drooping head—"the first-fruits of your heart cannot be mine, I know; but may I hope for nothing else? I will be contented with so little—to work for you, to care for you, to give you of my best—that is all I ask.

"And surely, dear, after a time, when you have once proved the strength of my devotion—surely a heart so tender and so true as yours, will find some little love to give me in return. I mean in time. I will be patient, Madge."

Madge lifted up her face, pale and quivering with feeling, and was about to answer, when the door was flung violently open, and Noel entered, slamming it behind him.

His dress was dusty and disordered, his face haggard.

"I thought as much," he said, looking at them with an evil glance.

"I had a pretty good idea where I should find you."

"I think," said Madge, with gentle dignity, "you might at least have spared me this."

"I want no words about it at all," returned Noel, curtly.

"I am here to take you back to Woodsdown, though"—sneering—"perhaps I am a fool for my pains.

"A girl who is so utterly lost to all self-respect as to follow a man who is no relative of hers even to his very room at this hour——"

"You had better be careful what you say," suggested Jack, with ominous composure, and at the same moment Mrs. Rennet came out of Madge's bedroom, duly arrayed in her best cap.

"Miss Hesketh came here under my protection, sir," she said, curtseying to her late master.

"My housekeeper in revolt, too!" cried Noel, furiously.

"This is all very fine; but you have mistaken the man you have to deal with.

"Return at once to your duties. You are in my service, and not in Miss Hesketh's, you must remember."

"No, sir, asking your pardon"—Mrs. Rennet made him another curtsey—"I have always been accustomed to gentlemen's houses, and I am no longer in your service.

"Miss Madge, I am ready whenever you may require me."

And, with this, she went back to the bedroom.

Noel shrugged his shoulders.

"Why have you left Woodsdown?" he demanded of Madge.

"You ask me why?" cried the girl, tremulously.

"I do. It is your home.

"It is my place as your betrothed husband, and your only relative, to protect you against evil advisers; and I desire you to return with me at once."

"And I refuse," answered Madge, steadily. "I have felt for many a day that I have stood in the way of your advancement in the world you have chosen; and there was a time when the knowledge caused me the bitterest pain a woman's heart can feel.

"But now——"

"What now?"

The girl drew up her slight figure.

"I know you," she said quietly. "The past is at an end for ever. I ask nothing from you henceforth but to let me go my way in peace."

"Absurd!" cried her cousin.

"If any nonsensical jealousy has prompted this step, you have chosen a highly unbecoming manner of showing it.

"Why should you take it for granted that I did not intend to fulfil the promise I made you?

"I can forgive some natural annoyance at my attentions in another quarter; but if your love is not proof——"

"My love!" echoed Madge, sadly. "That girlish love by which you set so little store is cold and dead; it perished in the same hour with Jack's, your benefactor's, friendship."

"Madge!" said Jack, in a low voice.

Noel turned livid.

"You some day repent what you are saying," he said.

"Never"—passionately.

"I wish the whole world could hear me speak.

"All I thought I loved in you existed only in him!"

She pointed to where Jack stood, his eyes fixed steadily upon her.

"He was your heart, your enthusiasm, your only good.

"I see that now; and he once gone, you were as one dead. You were like a body without a soul."

"What does this mean?" cried Jack, hoarsely, advancing a step nearer as he spoke.

"It means that I have learned the truth at last," she panted out.

"Ah, Jack, how could you speak to me as you did just now?

"Am I such a stock, such a slave, such a senseless thing as I must seem to you? You to supplicate to me, when my place should be in the very dust beneath your feet.

"Jack"—her sweet voice sank to a pleading whisper, she held out her hands—"I love you!"

Jack caught her wildly in his arms.

"Madge!" he said, incredulous.

"I love you!" she repeated, with her face close to his, "with the first love—warm, true and lasting, of the heart you have cherished so long.

"The early foolish blossoms were offered to another, 'tis true, but now they are withered and dead.

"The perfect bloom and sweetness of the ripened fruit is here for you—if you will take it, Jack."

"My wife, my wife!" cried Jack, in a broken voice.

And they kissed each other with a solemn kiss.

CHAPTER III.

"A VERY pretty scene, truly," sneered Noel.

"I had no idea I would be so much in the way.

"But I am rightly served!"

He turned to Madge, pale and devoured by jealousy.

Never had she looked so sweet and pretty before.

And when, during their brief engagement, had she spoken to him as she had spoken now to Jack?

When had her eyes met his as they were meeting Jack's?

"You seem to forget," he said bitterly, "that it was I who took care of you when you were left an orphan, and that it was I who gave you shelter?"

"No," answered Madge, "I don't wish to be ungrateful; but so many things are clear now that I did not understand at one time. It was not you, but Jack, who worked for me in those days.

"Oh, how can I ever repay him for all his goodness to me?"

"Well"—sneering again, Noel prepared to take his leave—"I will intrude upon your raptures no longer.

"In coming here, I merely wished to prove that my suspicions were correct before returning to the happiness that awaits me.

"I may as well mention, perhaps, that I have been accepted by Miss Blanchmayne; therefore our paths in life will naturally be very far apart henceforth."

"They have finally sold that poor girl to you, then?" said Jack, in supreme contempt.

"And you came here with a lie on your lips to insult Madge with a profession of constancy!

"Well, be kind to that unhappy lady, at least.

"To do her justice, she is a reluctant victim to the barter."

A hurried knock was followed by the entrance of Major Whyte, at sight of whom Madge shrank nervously away from Jack's side.

"That horrid man!" she said.

But Jack quickly drew her hand within his arm, and held it there tightly within his own.

"You are with me," he whispered gently.

"Do you suppose, my love, that any one would ever dare to hurt you while I am here?"

"My dear Blake," began the Major, a little shaken out of his usual languid manner; "what on earth are doing here, anyhow?"

"The very question," said Jack, somewhat sharply, "that I was about to ask of you."

The Major ignored the remark, and proceeded to address Noel, as though there was no one else in the room.

"I'm the bearer of bad news," he said; "for which you have no one but yourself blame.

"With the game in your hands, you chose to throw up your cards at the most critical moment, and——"

"What do you mean?" demanded Noel, fiercely.

"I mean that Miss Blanchmayne has bolted."

"Bolted?"

"Yes, with Ffolliott. By this time they are half way to Paris."

A bitter imprecation burst from Noel's livid lips.

"Why didn't you prevent them?" he cried.

"What else were you there for? And what was her mother about? Confound the fellow!

"I shall be the laughing stock of the whole county!"

"Awfully unlucky, to be sure"—the Major shrugged his shoulders, and chose not to notice Noel's rudeness.

He had no mind just yet to lose his comfortable quarters at Woodsdown.

"But you knew the girl was tricky—those stupid ones always are;and you would have done better to stay at home and kept your eye upon her."

Noel forced a laugh.

"It seems I am doomed to be unlucky in love," he said; "but I have still several thousand very substantial consolations left."

"To be sure," returned Major Whyte, cheerfully; "there is as good fish in the sea, you know. And so, if you are quite ready to start——"

"Before I go, I have one word to say to my cousin.

He turned to Madge, as she stood, proud and happy, at Jack's side.

"You have received me with coldness and insult," he said, with an unsuccessful attempt at indifference of manner, "but I cannot forget that I am your only surviving relative, and that it is my duty to provide for you, and enable you to lead a life of respectibility."

"Noel!" cried the girl; but he went on, as he took a pocket-book from the breast-pocket of his coat—

"By these papers you will find that I have settled on you the sum of——"

"Put up your pocket-book," interrupted Jack quietly. "My promised wife has only one answer—the answer you gave, not so very long ago in this room to Major Whyte—do you remember? Was there ever any thing to equal the insolence of these rich people?"

"I am addressing myself to my cousin Miss Hesketh, and not to you," returned Noel coldly. "I have nothing more to do with you at all. I advise you, Madge, to think twice before you refuse my offer. You will be glad to apply to me one of these days for help, and you may not find me so foolishly liberal as I have been to-day."

"Poor Noel!" said Madge, slipping a little hand into Jack's. "Nothing that you can say can hurt me now. I am sorry for you; I forgive you with all my heart; but I can not take your money, and so—good-bye."

"Dear me!" sneered Noel, half beside himself with rage, with jealousy, with wounded vanity. "There is only one thing wanted to complete the Arcadian felicity of the scene; but that I fear you cannot hope to enjoy—the presence of your much lamented dog

"What a pity he is not in a position to express his congratulations!"

"For shame!" cried Madge indignantly.

And Jack, walking to the door, flung it wide open in a manner that left no need for words.

The Major took the hint. Noel lingered still, grudging the happiness he was about to leave behind, when a vigorous scuffling, barking and growling was heard on the stairs, at the sound of which Jack and Madge uttered a cry of joy.

"Here he is, I say Jack!" shouted Sebastian Smythe's voice eagerly. "Here he is, old Van—not dead, but alive and kicking! Faith, he wanted to bite the Major just now on the stairs, and I am sorry he did not succeed."

The good fellow came rushing in impetuously into the studio, followed by old Van, who had one eye bandaged and two of his paws bound up, but who managed to limp over to the feet of his master, with many ecstatic expressions of delight, and to lick Madge's hand, as the girl and her lover knelt down beside him, covering him with caresses and calling him by every fond name in a dog's vocabulary.

"Oh, Sebastian, you good kind fellow!" cried Madge, "How did you find him? They told me he was dead. Oh, how good of you to think of him! Poor old Nan—dear old doggie!"

"Bless you," said Sebastian, "a little care will soon set him to rights! I picked him up in the shrubbery as I was leaving that confounded place, and I had his wounds seen to in the village, or I should have been here before."

Jack and his old friend shook hands with much cordiality. Old Van was lifted on to the sofa and covered with a shawl.

Freddy Sprott came running up from his room with Horngold, who had happened to look in to discover what all the row was about. Every one was crowding about the old wolf-hound and talking all at once. Good Mrs. Rennet was making the tea. Only Noel stood alone, with his sneers, in the middle of the happy, busy, friendly little crowd.

"The Warringtons are coming into supper," said Horngold, who now began to pull some bottles of champagne out of all sorts of mysterious pockets.

"I am afraid we cannot ask for the pleasure of Mr. Noel Blake's company."

Jack and Madge were standing now, hand-in-hand, before the unfinished picture of Octavia and Cleopatra. Horngold, looking round, saw how matters were.

"A shoe go after them, say I," he whispered to Smythe; and then in a moment the lovers were receiving congratulations, in the middle of which Noel slunk out of the room and down the stairs into the street, where the gas-lamps were glimmering dismally in the early darkness.

* * * * * *

"And you do not regret my child?" whispered Jack, the night before his wedding-day, as he stood with Madge at the hall-door which she had been instructed by Mr. Warrington to open for him, and when she was turning his coat-collar up about his throat and ordering him not to sit up too late smoking, and sending her love to Van. "You are not afraid to face poverty, uncertainity, anxiety——"

"Not with you," whispered the girl, hiding her happy eyes against his rough great coat.

"Poverty is such a little thing after all, so long as it does not get into your hearts! I don't mind it one bit in my pocket! Do you, Jack?"

"I don't know. I have never been poor! At least, not since I was twenty-five."

"What do you mean, you stupid great Jack, you?"

"I mean, that since then, I have always had you. I am awfully sorry for the rich fellows.

There is only one Madge in the world, you know—and she belongs to me, I thank Heaven!"

[THE END.]

◆

CIRCULATION OF THE BLOOD.—According to Harvey's own account, he can hardly claim the honor of having discovered the circulation of the blood; for another physician had discovered, and pointed out to him certain facts which could be accounted for in no other way.

Here it is:—

In Italy, Harvey studied with an eminent physician and philosopher named Fabricus ab Aquapendente. One day the old philosopher called his student into his laboratory, and exhibited to him a very beautifully prepared system of human veins and arteries, which he had dissected and preserved.

"There," said he, pointing to the great vein of the thigh, and then to other veins—the larger veins were all there—"do you observe those nicely adjusted valves? See how they work! They allow the blood to pass freely towards the heart, from all directions; but not a drop can go the other way! And see how plenty they are. Surely a Supreme Intelligence must have placed them there, *and for a purpose.*

"And here we have the arteries. Observe how strong are their walls. As iron to wood, when compared with the veins. And the arteries have no valves. Their walls are fashioned for resistance."

He might as well have said, if he did not say, "the veins, we see, are made for *lifting;* the arteries for *pumping.*"

However, Harvey came home, and told to England, and to the world, the story of the circulation of the blood. Had not his Italian master known it? Of course he had.

And Fraoricus ab Aquapendente gave to him the secret, for after the knowledge of the wonderful valvular arrangement of the veins, the next step to the blood's circulation was within the grasp of any person of ordinary interpenetration and scientific attainment.

◆

DON'T be afraid of loving people too much, or throwing away too much kindness. It is just such things as these that the world stands in need of, and they have the great advantage of enriching the giver.

CARVING A TROUGH.

We hear many stories of young artists leaving their native villages and country sweethearts to go to the metropolis in search of fame and fortune. An interesting true tale of this kind is told in the "Life of Sir Christopher Wren," the architect of St. Paul's Cathedarl, London.

Philip Wood was a village carpenter, who had developed an uncommon skill in wood-carving, and had made some striking figures for the adornment of his sweetheart's house, a lass above himself in rank and fortune. In the hope of improving his circumstances, and thus lessening the disparity between them, he went to London, where he sought work in vain, until his store of money was reduced to a single guinea.

"What have you been used to carving?" asked the architect.

The carpenter in the extremity of his agitation, could only stammer out "Troughs, your worship."

"Troughs!" said Sir Christopher. "Then carve me as a specimen of your skill a sow and pigs—it will be something in your line—and bring it to me this day week."

The poor fellow shrank away from the laughter of the workman, and returned to his lodgings in despair. But he had a friend in his landlady, who advised him to take Sir Christopher at his word, and carve the best sow and pigs he could in the time allotted.

With his last guinea he bought a block of pear wood, and by using his utmost diligence finished the work in time, and took it under his apron to the appointed place.

The architect was there, and beckoned the trembling carpenter to approach. Upon inspecting the beautiful work, Sir Christopher said, "I engage you young, man; attend at my office to morrow."

A few hours after, Sir Christopher came to the carver again, and said, "Mr. Addison wishes to keep your carving, and requests me to give you ten guineas for it." Then he added, "I fear I did you some injustice, but a great national work is entrusted to me, and it is my solemn duty to mind that no part of the work falls into inefficient hands. Mind and attend me to morrow."

It is a pleasure to know that the young artist did much of the carving of St. Paul's and married the girl of his heart, who could not have been sorry to change such a name as she had—Hannah Haybittle.

◆

AN ANCIENT BIBLICAL PICTURE.—Until very recently there has never been found in Pompeii, or Herculaneum, the slightest trace of any idea referable to a Jewish or Christian source. But in the progress of excavations, which have been of late diligently and carefully renewed by the government, a striking discovery has been made of a character thought by many to be clearly exceptional in this particular.

A short time ago there was removed from Pompeii to the Naples Museum, where it was placed among the Pompeiian frescoes, a picture, five and a half feet in length by one foot seven inches in height, which in the opinion of many good critics stands for the Judgment of Solomon.

The scene is laid on a terrace in front of a house, which is shaded by a white awning and festooned with creeping plants. On a platform which would be about four feet in height, sits the king, holding the sceptre and robed in white; on each side a counsellor, with six armed men in the rear. The king leans over the front of the platform towards a woman in a green robe, who is kneeling before him, with outstretched hands and dishevelled hair. In the centre of the foreground is a three legged table, on which lies an infant, held down in spite of its struggles by a woman wearing a turban. An armor clad soldier, having on his head a helmet with a long red plume, holds the child's legs, and is about to cleave it in twain with his falchion.

The coloring of this early specimen of mural art is particularly bright and fresh. The drawing is inartistic, yet full of spirit and expression. The artist apparently in the anxiety to develop strongly the expression of the faces of the figures, has exaggerated the heads in size and rather dwarfed the bodies.

At first glance this might suggest caricature, but the marked agony of the kneeling mother, the absorbed attention of the listening king, the complacency of the second woman, who appears to be gloating over the fate threatened by the lifted weapon, appear to repel all idea of travesty. No other discoveries were made in the exhumation of the house from which this was taken, which would tend to shed light upon its occupant's faith, or confirm the suspicion that some Jew had made his home even there.

But if this be indeed the first hint looking in that direction, it surely deserves remembrance. Anyhow, the stones of the desert, the mounds of the plains, and the exhumed frescoes of early art, all combine to bear testimony to the truth of the Divine Word.

◆

SENSITIVE TO MUSIC.—House lizards have long been known be very sensitive to the strains of music, but a scientific writer says that it is not due to the sense of hearing but to the sensibility of the cutaneous surface of the reptile to sound waves, and that a double chord struck with sufficient force on a pianoforte is sufficient to shock one to death.

◆

WERE a man to throw away a shilling every minute, he would be looked upon as a madman, and his friends would confine him as such; but a man who throws away time, which is far more valuable than gold, may still pass for a wise man.

Scientific and Useful.

ELECTRIC BOAT.—An electric launch was recently tried on the Thames, in England, with satisfactory results. It measures twenty-six feet in length, and draws about two feet of water. It has neither fire, boiler, nor chimney; indeed, it is without any visible means of propulsion. But stowed away under some flooring and seats are forty-five boxes, containing secondary batteries, which before starting on its trial trip, were charged by a dynamo-machine on shore. It was calculated that the power stored was equal to that of four horses, and would last for six hours. From the electrician's point of view, the boat is a great success.

SOOT.—To prevent the escape of soot into the atmosphere into places where bituminous coal is burned, a German engineer constructs two cylinders, one above the other, having a space between them rather greater than their diameter. They are placed either in the chimney or in a place above the grate, having communication with the smoke flue. The upper cylinder rests on a plate, closing the chamber, except inside the cylinder, so that the air around it is not in circulation. A band of sheet brass is wound spirally inside both of the cylinders, giving the smoke a rotary motion, which forces the particles of soot to fall down to a chamber outside the lower cylinder, whence it may be removed from time to time.

GLYCERINE LEATHER-POLISH.—Mix intimately together three or four pounds of lamp-black and a half pound of burned bones with five pounds of glycerine and five pounds of syrup. Then gently warm two and three quarter ounces of gutta-percha in an iron or copper kettle until it flows easily, add ten ounces of olive oil, and when completely dissolved, one ounce of sterine. This solution, while still warm is poured into the former and well mixed. Then add five ounces of gum senegal dissolved in one and a half pound of water, and an half ounce of lavender or other oils to flavor it. For use it is diluted with three or four parts of water. It gives a fine polish, is free from acid, and the glycerine keeps the leather soft and pliable.

Farm and Garden.

STRAW.—The preservation of straw for feeding purposes is very important. It is best secured at or immediately after thrashing them. The chaff, especially of wheat straw, is most valuable, and should, so far as possible be distributed through the stack. That which is left in rear of the straw carrier should be put under shelter, as it rots easily.

OLEOMARGERINE.—The London *Live Stock Journal* presents an interesting, if not very appetizing, picture of the possibilities of oleomargerine, when it quotes a statement that in one year the fat has been extracted from 151 tons of fish and tripe refuse, thirteen tons of cats and seven tons of dogs, and suggests that the fat thus obtained is "just that identical animal oil which suits the purpose best" of makers of oleomargerine.

SHEEP AND WHEAT.—A Texas farmer by turning his sheep in the wheat in the autumn, and allowing them to graze during the winter and spring when the [illegible] in condition, says: "The last piece of wheat I grazed will make twenty-five bushels to the acre, and it would have made more, but it was badly damaged by the worms. Now, I don't think my wheat was materially injured by grazing, and yet my whole lamb crop was raised on wheat."

COLTS AND RINGBONES.—A veterinary professor says that "the great majority of ringbones in young horses comes from the failure to shorten the toes." To this may be added that ringbone is apt to be formed if colts are allowed to stand on a plank floor or anywhere else where the footing is hard, during the first eighteen months of their age. Whether in stable or yard during this period, let them have earth for standing or walking free from stone or gravel.

FARMERS AND WORK.—On going to bed, change the clothes, and if those taken off are to be worn the next day, turn them so that they may air and dry thoroughly.—In eating, especially in warm weather, "go slow." Do not come in, hot from work, and at once sit down at the table, but take time to cool off, and at meals eat slowly. Many look upon the time spent at meals as wasted while it is really of the greatest importance. Eat slowly, and chew well. If you can prolong the time at meals by pleasant conversation, do so. Do not be in a hurry to resume work after meals in hot weather. Take a long nooning. Better spirits, and increased vigor and strength, will far more than make up the time taken to rest.

GRAFTING.—Grafting should be done as soon as the buds begin to swell. Having determined upon the place for the graft, saw off the branch, smooth the cut surface and make a cleft with the knife and mallet. Cut the cion from the twig, leaving two or three buds upon the piece, and sharpen the knife and place the cion in carefully so that the lower bud comes at the top of the cleft. The inner bark, or growing layer, of the cion and the stock should touch as much as possible. If the grafted branch is small, a single cion is enough, otherwise, put in one on each side. Unroll enough waxed cloth to cover the wound of both stock and cions, and press it on carefully and closely. The quick application of this protection is only a matter of practice. It is well for beginners to start with worthless limbs before doing regular grafting in the orchard.

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SIXTY-SECOND YEAR.

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SUCCESS.

There are people who seem foreordained to fail, as there are those who seem foreordained to succeed. Whatever one man touches turns to a cinder; whatever another man touches turns to gold. There are, however, certain conditions, upon our compliance with which success or failure may be contingent.

A radical mistake in the choice of a profession generally proves fatal. A man ought to find out what he is fit for, before he starts. If he enters upon a vocation that is above his capacity, he is sure to fail. No amount of industry can supply the natural defect. Some people will tell you that if you will only stick to it, no matter what line of life you have chosen, you are almost certain to succeed in the end. Many a poor, disappointed, over-worked man will tell you that this is not true. He has done his best, and failed. In every profession there is a large percentage of failures, simply because there are so many who strike higher than they can reach. I may be said, that a man cannot tell what he is fit for until he has tested his powers. There may be some truth in this, but in many cases other people can tell beforehand what we are not fit for. It requires no great amount of foresight to predict that certain persons whom we know can never be artists, or poets, or good public speakers. On the other hand, if one has a real genius for any particular profession, it will manifest itself soon enough. If the fire is in him, it will blaze out of itself.

But whatever profession we choose, success is impossible without labor. A fortune is not made without toil. Money seems to come very easy to a few favored people, but the world may not know how hard they had to work in the beginning. Newton said that all he had ever accomplished was the result of industry, but it was his genius that made him industrious. With the impulse that lay behind, he could not help working. The wind blew, and the mill must turn. A man of good parts may have his lazy fits, but he loses just so much because of this. His success is determined by the time he gives to his work, and the degree in which he concentrates his faculties upon what is before him.

An elastic temperament, besides, which never seems to recognize the fact of defeat, or forgets it at once, and begins the work over again, is very likely to ensure success. Many a great orator has made a terrible break-down in his maiden speech. Many a merchant loses one fortune only to build up another and a larger one. Many an inventor fails in his first efforts, and is at last rewarded with a splendid triumph. Some of the most popular novelists wrote very poor stuff in the beginning. They were learning their trade, and could not expect to turn out first-class work until their apprenticeship was over. One great secret of success is not to be discouraged.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A UNIVERSITY feud between Konigsberg and Heidelberg was settled at Berlin on the 16th ultimo, by duels between three delegates from each University, without seconds. Konigsberg won, having drawn blood fourteen times. Delegates from all the Universities watched the proceedings. The affair is reported without comment by the German papers.

—

A PARIS actress avers that each perfume has its special moral and physical qualities which, so far as her observations have gone, she states as follows: Musk predisposes to sensibility, amiability; rose to audacity, avarice and pride; geranium to tenderness; violet to mysticism and piety; benzoin to dreams, poetry and inconstancy; mint and verbena to a taste for the beautiful arts; camphor to brutality and stupidity; Russia leather to indolence; while ylang-ylang is the worst one of all.

—

A SMOOTH talker went from house to house among wealthy people in Chicago, telling them that a Count Eugene Radelskey, a wonderful pianist, but too aristocratic to perform before an ordinary audience, would give an entertainment on the conditions that it should not be advertised in the newspapers, and that admission should only be granted to carefully chosen persons. In this way about five hundred tickets were sold at $1.50 each. Carriage after carriage rolled up to the hall on the night of the promised performance, but the doors were found locked, and the janitor said: "I don't know nothing about no concert." The gentlemanly agent has not since been seen in that city.

—

THERE is not on earth a more lovely sight than the unwearied care and attention of children to their parents. Where filial love is found in the heart, we will answer for all the other virtues. No young man or woman will ever turn out basely, we sincerely believe, who has parents respected and beloved. A child, affectionate and dutiful, will never bring the gray hairs of his parents to the grave. It is seldom the case that a dutiful son is found in the ranks of vice, among the wretched and degraded. Filial love will keep men from sin and crime.

—

PASTEUR, the famous scientist, for the last ten years has been spending much of his time in the company of mad dogs, in order to test the value of his inoculation theory. He has just communicated the most recent results of his investigations to the French Academy of Sciences. He states that all the dogs which he had inoculated with the virus, and which had been cured of the disease thus communicated, enjoyed perfect immunity from a second attack. Hence he argues that dogs, being the originators of hydrophobia, should be compelled to pass through the ordeal of inoculation in order that they might thenceforth be powerless to drive men mad.

—

THERE is one sin which seems to be everywhere, and by everybody is underestimated, and is too much overlooked in estimation of character. It is the sin of fretting. It is as common as air, as speech; so common that unless it rises above its usual monotone, we do not even observe it. Watch any ordinary coming together of people, and see how many minutes it will be before somebody frets—that is, makes a more or less complaining statement of something or another, which, most probably every one in the room, or in the car, or on the street corner, as the case may be, knew before, and which most probably nobody can help. Why say anything about "it is cold, it is hot, it is wet, it is dry;" somebody has broken an appointment or ill-cooked a meal; stupidity or bad faith somewhere has resulted in discomfort. But don't fret, for it is time wasted.

—

THE friends of grammar, as now taught in the schools, have been pained, no doubt, at the evidences lately given of a growing dislike, not to say contempt, for that study. They will experience an additional pang when they learn that the New York Board of Education has decided to exile the grammatical text book from the public schools in that city, and require all instruction in grammar to be given orally. In the discussion which resulted in reaching this decision, the study of grammar, as heretofore pursued—and especially the exercises known as "parsing"—was treated with a disrespect which would have given a cold chill to the average devotee of grammar, if he had been present. The chairman of the board declared that the text books were unnecessary and uncalled for, while another member said that "in hanging on to the grammar we are behind the age, and the sooner we abolish it and come down to practical work the better for our schools."

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A GEORGIA editor writes that nine-tenths of the unhappy marriages are the results of green human calves being allowed to run at large in the society pastures without any yokes on them. They marry and have children before they have moustaches, they are fathers of twins before they have two pairs of pants, and the little girls they marry are old women before they are 20 years of age. Occasionally one of these gosling marriages turns out all right, but is a clear case of luck. If there was a law against young fellows sparking and marrying before they have cut all their teeth, we suppose they would evade it in some way; but there ought to be a sentiment against it. They see a girl who looks cunning, and they are afraid there is not going to be girls enough to go around, and then they go right in for business; and before they are aware of the sanctity of the marriage relation they are hitched for life; and before they own a cook-stove or a bedstead, they have to get up in the night and go after the doctor, so frightened that they run themselves out of breath and abuse the doctor because he doesn't also make haste; and when the learned man arrives on the scene there is not enough linen in the house to wrap up a doll-baby.

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THE street railway companies running bob-tail cars in the big cities are again finding a good many spurious nickels in their cash boxes, and it is pretty well understood how they are passed in. There might be a little comfort in knowing that much, but for the fact that the trick seems to be beyond the detection, at the moment of playing, of the variously-employed driver, and threatens to be a very serious offset to the economy of making every passenger his own conductor. A man stations himself in a crowded car near the door, and obligingly makes change for those behind him. He may occasionally make change from his own pocket, giving a good nickel to the passenger and putting a bad one in the box; but generally, it is believed, he passes silver out to the driver, gets the little envelope of change, tears it open, appears to drop one of its coins in the box, and in reality drops in a bad one, palming and subsequently pocketing the good one. The driver may watch the little mirror over his head until he has a collision and gets a crick in the back of his neck, yet cannot see the trick of exchange performed, and the coin in the box, so far as he can see through the glass, is good.

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A RECENT writer in the *China Review* exemplifies the difficulties surrounding interpretations from Chinese into English, or vice versa, by mentioning that simple question, "Was he (or she) dead?" which occurs so frequently in inquests and other judicial proceedings, admits of a positive or negative reply according to whether the European or Chinese idea as to when death occurs, be followed. We believe that a man is dead when he has ceased to breathe, and when his blood no longer circulates; the Chinese consider him still alive while a trace of warmth lingers in his body. The two estimates may thus differ by several hours. Hence it was that in inquests in Hong Kong the time of death formed a stumbling-block in almost every Chinese case. The medical evidence would show that the deceased must have been dead when brought to the hospital, while the relatives would swear he was alive at the gate. Subsequent inquiry showed that the general view among the Chinese was that a person is considered to be dead when the body is cold, and not before. It does not speak very well for the Chinese scholarship of the officials of Hong Kong that it took about 40 years to discover this important distinction.

—

THE term blackguard has a very commonplace origin. In all great houses, particularly in royal residences, there were a number of mean and dirty dependents, whose office it was to attend the wood-yards, sculleries, etc. Of these—for in the lowest depths there were lower still—the most forlorn wretches seem to have been selected to carry coal to the kitchen, halls and other apartments. To this smutty regiment who attended the progresses and rode in the carts with the pots and kettles, which, with every other article of furniture, were then moved from palace to palace, the people, in derision, then gave the name of "blackguards," a term since become sufficiently familiar. "To the bitter end" is clearly an old nautical expression. A dictionary published in the first part of the eighteenth century has "bite," a turn or part of a cable; "bitts," the main pieces of timber to which a cable is fastened when a ship rides at anchor; "bitter," a turn of the cable about the timber called "bitts," that it may be veered out by little and little; and "bitter end" (of a cable) is that part which is wound about the bitts when a ship rides at anchor. The modern cant expression, "to the bitter end," may have taken its rise either from the old nautical words, as meaning the last coil of the cable, or from the last end, the very "bitter" degree. It is a slang expression—another form of "I will fight you to the death." In it bitter only means pitiless, severe, like a bitter east wind or a bitter foe.

DRIFTING DOWN.

BY E. D. W.

Drifting down in the gray-green twilight,
Oh, the scent of the new-mown hay!
Soft drip the oars in the mystic skylight,
Oh, the charm of the dying day!
While fading flecks of bright opalescence
But faintly dapple a saffron sky;
The stream flows on with superb quiescence,
The breeze is hushed to the softest sigh.
Drifting down in the sweet still weather,
Oh, the fragrance of fair July!
Love me, love, when we drift together,
Oh, how fleetly the moments fly!

Drifting down on the dear old river,
Oh, the music that interweaves!
The ripples run and the sedges shiver,
Oh, the song of the lazy leaves!
And far-off sounds—for the night so clear is—
Awake the echoes of bygone times,
The muffled roar of the distant weir is
Cheered by the clang of the merry chimes,
Drifting down in the cloudiest weather,
Oh, how short is the summer day!
Love me, love, when we drift together,
Oh, how quickly we drift away!

Drifting down as the night advances,
Oh, the calm of the starlit skies!
Eyelids droop o'er the half shy glances,
Oh, the light in those blue-gray eyes!
A winsome maiden is sweetly singing
A dreamy song in a minor key;
Her clear low voice and its tones are bringing
A mingled melody back to me.
Drifting down the clear calm weather,
Oh, how sweet is the maiden's song!
Love me, love, when we drift together,
Oh, how quickly we drift along!

A Background of Gold.

BY PERCY VERE.

"ARE you my aunt Dorcas?"

Mrs. Torrance had been entertaining a neighbor at tea that afternoon, and she had just got the "things" washed up, and the apartment generally "tided," when there came a meek tap at the door, and there, in the yellow April twilight, stood a small figure, in a grey travelling shawl, holding a bag.

"Goodness alive!" said Mrs. Torrance "who be you?"

"I am Emily," said the girl. "Please let me in, for I am tired and cold. I've walked all the way from the station, and I've had nothing to eat since noon."

"Well I never," said Mrs. Torrance. "You're the city schoolma'am, ain't you, as went out to live with cousin Henry? And he's dead, and the money has all gone to the Baptist Widow and Orphan Fund. You didn't make much by that move, did you? And you've come to us now, though we wasn't stylish enough for you before. Well, come in, come in."

And Mrs. Torrance, who was essentially a kind-hearted woman, albeit she could not repress the sneer that arose to her lips, moved the low chair to the fire, and flung another log on the andirons.

Cousin Henry had been the family apple of discord ever since they could all remember.

He was rich, he was eccentric, he was crabbed.

He had shut the door in the faces of his relations, until, towards the last, sick and feeble, he had signified his desire that Emily Alden should come and take care of him.

And Emily had gone.

There had been a spice of jealousy in the family as regarded Emily for a long time.

Emily had been looked upon as "proud" and "stuck up," because instead of learning the dressmaker's trade, she had elected to be a teacher.

She had never visited Joe Torrance's family until now—now that cousin Henry had willed his money to the Baptist Widows and Orphans—her own mother was dead, and her stepfather, a pompous old wholesale grocer, objected to stepchildren, so that there seemed to be no other haven of refuge left to her.

Who could blame Mrs. Torrance for a momentary feeling of triumph when Emily Alden came thus to her doorstep in the twilight of that April day?

But she helped her off with her things, made a cup of tea for her, and finally escorted her to a little room under the roof, where the floor was covered by a home-made rag-carpet, and the bed decorated with a rainbow quilt, and you could look out of the window into a green meadow.

"I hope you'll sleep well," said Mrs. Torrance. "We have breakfast at five."

And then she went away.

Early as was the breakfast hour, Emily was awake at least an hour before it.

As if the tumultuous glee of the robins in the old orchard would permit any one to sleep!

And as she lay with her cheek against the pillow, watching the rosy dawnlight creep up the wall, she heard the sound of voices in the meadow below her casement.

"What is she like mother?" said Job, Junior, who was milking.

"Oh, she looks well enough," Mrs. Torrance carelessly responded. "Little and dark, with big shady eyes, and a real Torrance mouth. Doesn't talk a great deal, and is dressed shabby, as one might expect."

"Poor thing," said Job pityingly.

"Well," said Mrs. Torrance sharply, "I can't say but what I think she deserves all she got. Them Aldens always were as proud as Lucifer."

"You'll keep her, mother, of course?"

"I suppose so," said Mrs. Torrance. "I don't suppose she's got anywhere else to go."

There was no more delicious dozing for Emily now.

She rose hurriedly, dressed herself, and came downstairs.

"Aunt Dorcas," she said, as she encountered that lady frying ham and eggs over the kitchen fire, "what is there, in this neighborhood for a woman to do?

"Eh?" said Mrs. Torrance in suprise.

"To earn her living, I mean," explained Emily. "Is the district school supplied with a teacher?"

Mrs. Torrance nodded as she placed the slices of frizzling ham on a blue-edged plate, and arranged the eggs in golden spheres above.

"Do you know of any one who wants a girl?" pursued the city cousin.

Mrs. Torrance sat the coffee-pot on the table, called for Job, and then responded to her niece's query by a counter-question.

"Why dont you stay here?"

"Because," said Emily, with spirit, "I want to earn my own living."

"Well, you can earn it here, can't you?" I was thinking to hire a girl this spring, and if you'll work honestly for it, I'll give you the money I was going to pay a hired girl."

Emily's pale face brightened.

"I should like that," said she.

And then Job came in, tall, handsome, and flushed, his curls yet wet from the spring into which he had dipped them, and a sprig of fresh lilac pinned into his coat, and spoke a frank welcome to the young cousin whom he had never before seen.

"So Cousin Henry Seeley is dead?" said he.

"Yes," said Emily quietly.

"Did you like him?"

"No," confessed the girl. "He was cross and surly, and had no sympathy with anybody. But I tried to be kind to him, and he kissed me once before he died, and said I had been a 'good girl.'"

"And then went and left his money to the Refuge for Baptist Widows and Orphans!" said Mrs. Torrance. "That's cousin Henry all over."

"He had a right to do as he pleased with his money," said Emily, a faint glow rising to her cheek.

"Well, it's all over and gone," said Mrs. Torrance. "There's no use talking about it now."

And she sighed softly to think how many of life's hard angles might have been avoided in the future if only cousin Henry had been less interested in the Baptist Widows and Orphans.

At the end of a month Mrs. Torrance was forced to acknowledge that Emily Alden had well earned her wages and board.

The girl certainly had about her that wonderful magnetic power which philosophers dub "executive ability."

She was a natural cook—she did things without seeming to take any trouble at all.

"I don't understand it," said Mrs. Torrance. "A little dark slim thing, that was always brought up to sit with her hands folded."

And one sultry July day when Job and Emily came in from strawberrying, with crimsoned fingers, laughing faces, and baskets heaped high with the fragrant fruit, Mrs. Torrance started in the solitude of the dairy where she was making cheese.

"I declare," she cried. "I wonder I never thought of it before. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I never can consent to it in the world."

Job came to her that same evening.

"Mother," said he, "Emily has promised to be my wife."

Mrs. Torrance burst into tears.

"You're only six and twenty years old, Job," she faltered.

"Just two years older than my father was when he married you, mother. Now don't turn your face away; but tell me plainly—have you any fault to find with my choice?"

"N—no," confessed Mrs. Torrance.

"Do you think I could possibly win a sweeter girl than Emily Alden?"

"No, I don't suppose you could," answered the mother-in-law elect; "but it's natural, Job, to feel a little jealous when you see some one else taking the first place in your child's heart."

But when Job brought Emily in to receive her kiss of greeting, Mrs. Torrance had sufficiently conquered herself, to bid her new daughter welcome.

"Though I s'pose, Emily," said she, a little bitterly, "you looked higher than a farmer once."

"I never looked higher than one of nature's noblemen," said Emily, with a smile that fairly won the old lady's heart.

That same evening, as they all sat together in the orange twilight, with the scent of tall, white lilies in the air, Emily suddenly broke the silence.

"Job," said she, "would you like to be rich?"

"Well yes," said Job. "I'd like money enough to keep my wife in luxury."

"Would you aunt Dorcas?" said Emily, turning to Mrs. Torrance.

"Of course I should," said that matron, vigorously plying the knitting needles; "but I don't ever expect it."

"But you are rich," said Emily, with a little tremble in her voice. "Job is rich—we are all rich together, with cousin Henry Seeley's money."

"But," cried Mrs. Torrance, "I thought he'd left it all to the Baptist widows and Orphans."

"Not all," said Emily. "It's a secret, but I may tell you now. Half was left to the Refuge—the other ten thousand is mine, to be paid over to me on the day on which I marry a man who, ignorant of cousin Henry's bequest, has loved me loyally and well. It was the old man's whim, and I have respected it. Oh, Aunt Dorcas, I came to you, because in my loneliness and bewilderment, I knew not where else to go—but I little dreamed that I was entering directly into the kingdom of a noble heart."

It was true.

Henry Seeley, eccentric in his life, had been equally eccentric in his death; and when Mr. Mustybill, the lawyer, paid over the legacy, he said, chuckling—

"It's all right. It's exactly as my poor client would have had it. I congratulate you, Mrs. Job Torrance."

And Mrs. Torrance the elder has a higher opinion than ever of her daughter-in-law's attractions, now that they are set in a background of gold.

The Commune's Spy.

BY HENRY FRITH.

A PROMINENT store in Rue Lapithe, Paris, was that of Jean Guileau, baker, a widower with one child, Hortense; and Hortense, at the date of this "o'er-true" narrative, was just seventeen years of age, and very beautiful.

Jean wisely took no part, *pro* or *con*, in the communistic orgies running riot on the streets of the erst gay capital, immediately subsequent to the Franco-Prussian war, but with a plenty of provision in his cellar, he philosophically closed doors and windows, withdrew his sign of business, and smoked his pipe contentedly in the seclusive companionship and filial love of Hortense.

One so pretty, piquant, and pure as she could not be exempt from a besieging of lovers.

The two most prominent of these were her father's graduating apprentices, Henri Edouin, and Guiseppe—"dark Guiseppe" of "the baleful eye;" the latter was frequently appellated by his intimates, because of the treacherous glance in his hard, black orbs, and a wicked smile for ever fixed about his lips.

To Henri, Hortense had long since given her fresh young heart.

It was quite late one night when Henri departed from the embrace of his promised bride.

As Hortense retreated through the little narrow doorway, an unexpected form like an apparition from the gloom, confronted her.

"Guiseppe!"

"It is I."

"Oh, you frightened me. Whence come you so suddenly?"

"From close beside, girl. Ah, thou coquette, a word. I have heard all——"

"A listener—you? Shame!"

"Tell me—is it true indeed I need hope no more to win you?"

"You said you have heard all?"

"Yes; I am not deaf."

"And you have seen too?

"Yes; I am not blind."

"Much good may it do you then, for you are answerrd."

And, with this sharp speech, she slammed the door full in his face, angry at his having spied upon what was to her a sacred interview.

For many nights after that her dreams were haunted by the baleful eyes of dark Guiseppe, and in her ears continually rung the fearful imprecation she heard him mutter, coupled with the name of Henri Edouin.

The favored lover was greatly suprised, a few days later, at receipt of a communication from the Versailles government.

It was delivered by an entire stranger, who whispered these six ominous words—

"For your eyes only. Be discreet."

The sealed billet contained this.

"Last despatches by balloon acknowledged. Inclosed herewith an order for 500 francs, payable when France is redeemed from her enemies.

* * * * *

"Mr. Edouin, Paris."

Henri should have destroyed the mysterious scrawl instantly.

Instead, he stood gazing at it in sheer amazement.

He had had nothing whatever to do with the Versaillese, though his heart was honestly with those who strugled so nobly to save the country from the doom of a bloody anarchy.

The few moments' stupefaction proved his greatest misfortune.

There was a peremptory tap at the door.

Guiseppe entered, grinning infernally; behind him, "dressed," three ruffians of the National Guard.

"Ah, Monsieur Edouin!"

"Oh, is it you, Guiseppe?"

The comer advanced with snaky quickness, and ere Henri could anticipate, snatched away the fatal papers.

Flourishing these aloft, he cried—

"Away with him!

"See what I hold—papers that will have him shot, unless I am greatly mistaken!"

And he hissed maliciously into his rival's ear—

"Voila! I am now a trusted spy of the Commune.

"Your death is certain.

"You will never wed Hortense Guileau!"

Poor unfortunate Henri was soon in prison.

He fully realized his danger, and it required but little reflection to convince him of the foul trick played by crafty Guiseppe.

The days of his confinement went tediously by, while ever before him loomed the horrid prospect of a violent death.

Then Guiseppe confronted his victim, and accompanying him—could it be reality?—was his own dear Hortense.

"I bring to you a gleam of sunlight, Monsieur Edouin," said the dark-browed villain, with grinning sarcasm.

Henri sprang forward to embrace his betrothed; but Guiseppe interposed.

"Hold!

"I did not bring her here for a love-scene.

"Give ear to me.

"Minutes for Henri Edouin are valuable.

"Judgment is to be given in your case within the hour;

"You know what it will be—death! I come to offer you life."

"You?"

"And pray why not?

"I hold the document that is to riddle you with bullets.

"Say the word, and I will destroy it.

"I will retract my charge as a stupid blunder."

"That word——"

"Henceforth you will work and fight on the side of the Commune.

"That will save you—as I choose.

"Guiseppe the spy is quite another person than Guiseppe the baker's apprentice.

"Money and influence both are mine now.

"Besides, our prisons are cramming with too many hostages.

"Exchanges are slow and we need men.

"So come, I have your sworn word——"

"Never!" burst from Henri's lips indignantly.

Throughout Hortense had remained passive.

Now she threw herself upon her knees, with clasped hands, before the man she so dearly loved.

"Oh, yes, yes!" she cried passionately.

"For me—for your own precious life, Henri!

"Anything for your life!

"Promise!

"Swear!

"Here on my knees I beg you."

Her voice was broken with wild sobbing; her eyes brimming with tears.

The young man's head drooped, then raised desperately, while his eyes flashed on the treacherous spy.

"So be it, villain.

"I give my sacred promise as you ask," said Henri.

The mysterious and convicting letter was instantly torn into fragments.

Guiseppe had not boasted vainly.

Two days later Henri Edouin was liberated and mounted in the National Guard.

For a long time he found no opportunity of seeing Hortense.

When at last the lovers did meet it was to realize the greatest sorrow of their two fond hearts.

As the price for saving Henri's life, Hortense had solemnly agreed to wed with Guiseppe.

* * * * * *

Ever memorable will be the 28th of May, 1871, when the following proclamation appeared—

"INHABITANTS OF PARIS!

"The army of France came to save you. Paris is delivered. Our soldiers carried, at four o'clock, the last positions occupied by the insurgents. To-day the struggle is finished. Order, labor and security will now survive.

"DE MACMAHON, DUKE OF MAGENTA,
"Marshal of France, Commander-in-Chief."

Crowds and columns of prisoners were being marched to Versailles.

The prisoners' camp at Satory was an anomalous picture, even shuddertul to contemplate.

A man with baleful eyes and snaky lips approached one of the entrances to the stable-pens.

The prompt "who goes there?" halted him.

"Pardon," was the affable grinning response; "but I am a quarter-master.

"You have here, by a great mistake, a good cousin of mine, who will answer to the name of Henri Edouin.

"Be so good as to summon him to me.

"I am not so great a fool as to ask his release just now, but would speak to him if I may."

Villainous Guiseppe, ever treacherous, and fearing that Henri might escape to annoy him in the future—and jealous to insanity that the man should live to whom Hortense was so avowedly attached—he had sought the prisoners' camp with murderous intent.

In his bosom he carried a pistol, and with the weapon was resolved to slay the rival he hated.

His speech at the gate was interrupted by a savage cry.

A bronzed gendarme, who was standing near, threw aside his musket, and, springing forward, gripped the quartermaster by the throat.

"This wretch lies," he vociferated excitedly.

"He is Guiseppe, of the Commune—Guiseppe the spy—who ordered forty of my comrades shot.

"I alone escaped.

"I know him well."

A fierce struggle ensued.

There was a flash, a bang, and the gendarme dropped dead.

But simultaneously a musket-butt crashed down through the skull of Guiseppe.

The baleful eyes were dimmed for ever.

* * * * * * *

It would be difficult to describe the tearful pleadings of the beautiful Hortense before the gentlemen of the Military Bureau in Rue Satory.

She knew and revealed the trick which had placed Henri in Guiseppe's power.

She told the story of her heart's sacrifice to save her lover's life, and his unwilling yielding to the proposition of his arch-enemy.

It was an appeal to touch the deepest sympathy of her hearers.

Henri Edouin was forthwith set at liberty.

He and his true Hortense were shortly afterwards wedded, and when Paris had subsided to comparative quiet, old Jean Gulleau gave a merry feast to the handsome couple of this romantic incident.

"This House to Let."

BY BERTIE BAYLE.

"THIS house to let."

Mr. Frank Bayberry's Perston morning gown floated "like a meteor on the troubled air," as he rushed out before breakfast and wafered the truculent-looking bill on the front of the house with four fat red wafers.

The milkman across the way stared; the neighbor's servant-maid paused in her occupation of flirting dust into the corners of the area and then out again.

In short, it made a small sensation in the neighborhood, and sensations, as we all know, widen indefinitely.

While Mr. Bayberry went back into the house with the air of one who has not lived in vain.

"There!" said he. "I have put a bill up."

"I'm glad of it," said Mrs. Bayberry, "for between obstreperous servant-girls, and everlasting plumbers' bills, and baby's teeth, I'm completely worn out, and tired of housekeeping.

"It will be like a new lease of life to board, for a little while."

"Humph!" said Mr. Bayberry. "I'm not so sure of that.

"But the bill is up anyhow, and the next thing is to get the old place rented and off our hands."

And with the striking of ten o'clock (the house, as mentioned in the fine print of the "To Let," was visible between the hours of ten and two,) there set in a solid phalanx of house-hunters of all varieties.

At first Mrs. Bayberry endeavored to treat the house-hunters politely, but she soon discovered that self-defence required a different method of treatment; and when Mrs. Foxley said the cellar smelt like an old vault, and that the house wasn't fit for decent people to live in, she simply remarked that there was no law requiring her, Mrs. Foxley, to live in it if she didn't like it.

Mrs. Fitzfaddle, the bride, didn't like the location.

Her James, she was sure, wished to be nearer the park; and she was sorry the house had not hard-wood finish and electric bells.

"But," cried Mrs. Barberry, "you can't expect that sort of thing for three hundred a year."

The bride tossed her head.

Evidently she didn't mean to be dictated to.

Everybody was going into flats now, she said, and she didn't know why she wasted her time in looking at dingy old houses like this.

And after two o'clock, when Mrs. Bayberry had retired to her room to have hysterics and green tea at her leisure, the house-hunting public made unceasing charge up the steps and at the door, still demanding admittance; until at last, Mrs. Bayberry, peeping through the window-blinds, saw a stout gentleman coming up the steps, with a gold-headed cane and a broad-brimmed beaver hat.

"Madam," said the old gentleman, "I wish to take this house."

"You wish to look at it, you mean," said Mrs. Barberry feebly. "But the hours for inspection——"

"Madam," firmly repeated the old gentleman, "I wish to take it.

"To engage it—to rent it from the first of May next."

"But you haven't seen it!" cried Mrs. Barberry.

"Madam," said the old gentleman, "I don't wish to see it.

"My family consists of myself, an invalid relative, and an old servant.

"And it must be a very poor house, indeed, if it does not meet our simple requirements.

"Shall I take down the bill?

"My references are Letall and Co., real estate agents, No. —— Pine Street."

"If you please," said Mrs. Bayberry, feeling as if a weight had been lifted off her heart.

So down came the "To Let!" and fluttered into the gutter.

Mr. Bayberry arrived to a late tea, with a lobster and a bunch of spring lettuce under his arm.

"Well, Fanny," said he, "I've got good news for you.

"The house is let!"

"How did you know?" said Mrs. Bayberry.

"The real estate agent told me, just now.

"To a very respectable old couple—man and wife.

"Intending to take a few lodgers, I am told."

Mrs. Bayberry opened her eyes very wide.

"Well, said she, "he certainly does look very respectable.

"But when he said 'invalid relative,' I had not an idea that he meant his wife.

"And I should not think it would be very pleasant for the lodgers to have a sick person in the house."

And she told her husband about the benevolent-visaged old gentleman in the broad-brimmed hat.

"It's very odd," said Mr. Bayberry reflectively.

"But it's none of our business."

All this being, as they supposed, definitely settled, Mrs. Bayberry was not a little surprised, the next day, at the arrival of Mrs. Fitzfaddle, the bride, with a tape measure and a small memorandum-book.

"To measure for the carpets, you know," said she.

"It isn't quite the sort of house we could have wished, but dear James's salary has been cut down twenty-five per cent, so we have taken this house in default of anything better."

"But it's taken already," said Mrs. Bayberry.

"You must be mistaken," said Mrs. Fitzfaddle.

"James rented it yesterday for a year, of the owner, Mr. Trimmer, No —— Peanut Court.

"And if you could give us possession a few days before the first of May, it would be a very great accommodation indeed."

"I'm sure I don't understand it at all," said Mrs. Bayberry.

"You will have to settle it with the landlord.

"I'm not responsible."

But while the discussion still waged high, in bustled a portly old lady, just as if the house belonged to her.

"Mrs. Hodgson," said she, with a comfortable nod of the head.

"The new tenant.

"Come to see what arrangement could be made about storing a few of my trunks and things, before I move in regularly."

"Madam," said Mrs. Fitzfaddle, "the house is mine."

"I've got the blank lease in my pocket, ma'am, all ready for the signatures," said Mrs. Hodgson.

And the two ladies were glaring furiously at one another, when the stout gentleman in the broad-brimmed hat entered.

"I thought," he said, "that perhaps it might be as well for me to make a diagram of the rooms, so if——"

"Oh, stop, stop!" cried Mrs. Bayberry despairingly, clasping her hands to her head.

"It's been let twice over already! I do hope you will not be disappointed, but ——"

A dark frown overspread the old gentleman's countenance.

"Madam," said he, "this is scarcely business-like."

"Oh dear, oh dear!" said poor Mrs. Bayberry.

"My head is whirling round like a top!

"I don't see how it can possibly have happened, but here are three people, all saying that they have specially and separately engaged this house.

"Somebody telephone to my husband, or I shall go crazy."

In came Mr. Bayberry, accompanied by Lettall & Co., Rentquick & Son, and Mr. Elias Trimmer, who owned the very eligible residence under discussion.

And in this committee of the whole it speedily transpired that the house actually had been rented to three different tenants by the various persons in whose charge it was.

And not one of them was willing to abate one jot or tittle of his or her rights and privileges.

But presently up spoke the fat old lady.

"Dear me!" said she: "can't we all arrange matters comfortable-like?

"Ain't we making a deal of fuss about a very little thing?

"This 'ere old gent don't really want but three rooms; and the young lady," with a curtsy to Mrs. Fitzfaddle, whose Rhine pebbles she thought to be genuine diamonds, "will be quite satisfied with the second floor through.

"And me and Hodgson—we want to take lodgers, and will be suited with the basement-story.

"And the rent won't be but a third as much—don't you see, my dears?—and everybody snug and satisfied."

"A capital idea!" said the old gentleman.

"I don't know but what it is worth considering," said the bride, "in consideration of the twenty-five per cent. reduction of my husband's salary.

"And if one chooses they can call it a flat."

And the countenances of the agent and landlord, who had anticipating nothing less annoying than a three cornered lawsuit, grew radiant again, and matters were all settled.

"But," said Mrs. Bayberry, "if it had been necessary to put up that bill again, I think I should have run away to Patagonia!

"Anything—anything but a House to Let!"

MAILED free, by DRS. STARKEY & PALEN 1109 Girard Street, Philadelphia, their "Treatise on Compound Oxygen, its Action, Nature, and Results." A very remarkable publication.

Love and Fortune.

BY JULIUS THATCHER.

A BLUSTERING uncomfortable day in early November.

In Miss Miner's sitting-room however everything was as cosy and delightful as could be desired.

And Miss Hetty Minner, sitting before the fire, her black silk skirt turned carefully back over her lap, and her substantially made boots resting comfortably on the fender.

An elderly woman—forty odd—with a sharp shrewd face, and bright little eyes, and a resolute look around her mouth.

A homely, outspoken woman, who was proud to say she had never been in love, who lived in luxury, although on a small scale, and who had a hundred thousand in government bonds to leave to her relations when she died: and in all the world she had but two relatives, Mrs. Carisford Carl her married sister, and Mr. Parker Dollingby, her half-brother, who was being jealous that old Simon Carmen had left Hetty his fortune, just because she had happened to befriend him in his poor ante-mining days.

This especial afternoon, as she sat meditatively before the fire, she suddenly broke the stillness with an energy of speech that made the young girl, reading in the bay-window nearly concealed by the curtains look startedly up from her book.

"Ellice, you're a fool!"

Evidently Ellice Dunning had not lived five years as companion and personal attendant to Miss Miner in vain, for she manifested no surprise at the rough speech, beyond the swift, brief, little startled look in her soft winey-brown eyes.

She closed her book, and came out into the room, a little flush on her face.

"Do you think so, Miss Miner?"

"Most certainly I think so, or I shouldn't have said so.

"You are a fool, Ellice Dunning, and I hate to see you throw yourself away so foolishly.

"Do show you common sense if you've got any, and let that young jackanapes of a doctor go.

"You're better off without him.

"I'll give you a new seal-skin cloak this winter if you'll give him up."

"I couldn't give him up, Miss Miner. I love him too well."

"What nonsense!

"You love him too well!

"Love indeed.

"It's all absurdity. I never was in love in all my life."

Ellice dropped her eyes in a pretty, little confused way.

"I can't help that, Miss Miner.

"I love Frank, and he loves me.

"We'd be perfectly miserable if we were parted.

Miss Miner dropped her feet from the polished silver bar to the hearth with a resonant bang as she jumped up indignantly.

"Engaged to be married to Doctor Olevin!

"Did I ever!

"Well, Ellice Dunning—very well.

"You may pack my hand-valise at once.

"I am going to London on a visit, by the six-ten train, and I'll be home on Thursday.

"When I come back, don't let me find you here, you ungrateful little wretch—you!"

Ellice's lips quivered, and her eyes filled with diamond-bright tears.

"Miss Miner! You don't mean to turn me away?"

"That is just what I mean!

"I have told you, time and again, I didn't approve of men and love-making, and I won't have it where I am!

"You can take your choice—me or Doctor Olevin.

"I'll give you just five minutes."

A little red flush crept into the girl's cheek.

"I don't want five minutes for a choice, Miss Miner!

"You have been very good to me, and I cannot forget your kindness; and I think I have done my duty by you.

"But nothing could come between me and Doctor Olevin."

"All right, then.

"Don't let me see you here when I come back."

And then Ellice went up to Miss Miner's room, and packed the red Russia satchel, dropping a few tears as she folded the garments Miss Miner would require.

"I'll go to Mrs. Carisford Carl," Miss Miner decided, as she sat in the city bound express, in the early dusk of the November evening.

"Camelia thinks all the world of me, I know.

"Her daughter would not act as that ungrateful young minx dared act.

"The idea of preferring a penniless young doctor with a moustache—a nasty black moustache—to me.

"After all I've done for her, too!"

And then Miss Miner leaned back very contentedly in her seat, satisfied that she had done her whole duty by herself, and Ellice Dunning, too.

It was just half-past eight when the cab deposited her at the door of Mr. Carisford Carl's house—a comfortably cosy place, with the name on the door in full.

A servant showed her in, and asked her name; but Miss Miner wanted to surprise her sister, and sent word that a friend wished to see her, while she seated herself in the parlor, where a little girl sat curled up in a cushioned chair, reading.

"You want to see my mamma, I suppose?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Miner with an affable smile.

"You are Hetty, I suppose?"

The child gave a heavy sigh.

"Yes, I'm Hetty. Oh, don't I hate that name!"

"Why, I think it's a first rate name.

"You are a namesake of somebody, I guess?"

"Yes, I am.

"Old Hetty Miner, my aunt, who lives out in the country.

"I never have seen her, and I don't want to either, 'cause mamma says she's the meanest old thing in all creation—a regular old Miss Nancy, papa says."

Miss Miner smiled—a little queerly.

"Oh! that's what they say, is it? Well, Hetty, I am your aunt Miner."

The child opened her eyes wider.

"Are you?

"Then won't mamma be mad!

"We expect company after awhile, and mamma won't want you at all.

"We'd be dreadfully ashamed of you before the Algernons.

"You're going to leave us your money, ain't you?

"Papa and mamma said they were most tired of waiting—you had as many lives as a cat.

"We're going to Paris as soon as you die."

"Are you?" said Miss Miner, with an insane desire to shake the pert self-possessed venomous youngster.

"Well I wouldn't depend upon it if I were you."

And before Mrs. Carl came downstairs, Miss Miner was out in the street, on her way to her half-brother's house.

"A pretty nest of vipers those Carls are!

"Thank Heaven, I've found them out in time!

"Going to Paris on my money!

"Why, ungrateful as that little Ellice is, she is not as treacherous as my own flesh and blood.

"Humph!"

And her complacency was not yet restored when she left the street-car on the nearest corner to Mr. Parker Dollingby's bachelor quarters, that was a'light in a perfect blaze of bright cheer.

"It looks like a party," she though.

But all the same she did not hesitate to go up the imposing stone steps and ring the bell, to which no response coming, she tried the door-knob, and admitted herself into a large brilliantly-lighted hall, at the end of which was a room, from which came the sounds of revelry and jollification that had prevented her ring being heard.

Miss Miner went into the first door that stood ajar, and through another partly-closed door she saw the gay bachelor party—some ten or fifteen—merry over their wine.

"So that's the way Parker Dollingby does, is it?" she asked herself grimly, just at the same instant that gentleman's voice, distinct, boisterous, rose high, and for a second silenced all others.

"Here's to the health of my most respected ancient mariner-ess—a veritable old maid all forlorn, whose legacy is a long time coming, but sure to get here some time.

"A cool hundred thousand dollars or so, boys; and imagine the swell we will cut when the venerable Mehitable kicks the bucket.

"Drink to her, boys!"

Somehow Miss Miner took herself out of the house.

She was silent all the way to the hotel; and then, once in the room, locked her door, and sat down and actually cried, and then went to bed, wondering if it was ever granted to mortals to come nearer to being made a fool of than she had been—and at two o'clock in the morning to awaken with a strange sick feeling that was awful to endure in that big lonely hotel, where she did not know a living soul.

But she rang for assistance, and the servant brought her a physician who happened to be staying over night; and her life was saved from the terrible attack of gastralgia by Dr. Frank Olevin.

"I'll pay you when I get home," she said tersely.

"You can go with me, if you don't mind my green veil and bag."

And so after reaching home, where Ellice Dunning, in readiness to leave by a train an hour later, opened the door in answer to an imperious summons, Miss Miner stalked in, followed by Dr. Olevin.

"You needn't be frightened, Ellice," she said in a wonderfully soft tone of voice.

"I've changed my mind. I'm the fool, not you.

"Here's your lover; you can have him and welcome.

"And when you're married, I'm going to settle my fortune on you and let you live here; if you'll give me a room somewhere.

"Take off your things and go get a cup of coffee for us."

And that was the way little brown-eyed Ellice came into her double inheritance of love and fortune.

RABBITS.—It is said sulphur and lard, when smeared here and there on trees, keep rabbits from injuring them.

DELEVAN, WIS., Sept. 24, 1878.

GENTS—I have taken not quite one bottle of the Hop Bitters. I was a feeble old man of 78 when I got it. To-day I am as active and feel as I did at 30. I see a great many that need such a medicine.

D. BOYLE.

New Publications.

The February *St. Nicholas* celebrates St. Valentine's Day in capital style with an amusing story by Sophie Sweet, called "A Queer Valentine," and one has but to read it to see the appropriateness of the title. Anna North contributes The Mission of Mabel's Valentine; and there is a funny little poem, My Valentine, by J. M. Anderson. A timely and thrilling article is Joaquin Miller's In the Land of Clouds. Another paper which is sure of a hearty welcome is one with the attractive title, A New Winter's Sport, which is written by Hjalmar H. Boyesen, who introduces our American boys to the *skee* or Norwegian [illegible]. Of the serial stories, The Tinkham [illegible] Mill, by J. T. Trowbridge [illegible] heroes in a still more [illegible] last month. The Story of the Field of the Cloth of Gold, by E. S. Brooks, contains an interesting account of a tournament. Besides this, and a good deal more, are poems and stories by Celia Thaxter, Frank H. Converse, Palmer Cox, Mary Lowe Dickinson, a play by [illegible] Emmett, Elizabeth Thompson, R. B. Birch, Bolles, H. P. Share, Hopkins, Cox, Rose Muller, and others. The Century Co., New York.

Eclectic Magazine.—The February number of this excellent periodical comes promptly to hand freighted with the usual admirably chosen assortment of seasonable [illegible]. There is something for every [illegible]. The contents are as follows: [illegible] of Materialism, a joint [illegible] Romance and the Lord Bishop of [illegible]. Four Months in [illegible] record of adventure in a strange land. A True Ghost Story; Star unto Star, by Richard A. Proctor; A Lesson on Democracy, by James A. Froude; Gœthe's West-Eastern Divan; A Festival Among the Basques; Au Pair, a story in six chapters; An Autumn Morning; American Millionaires; Walt Whitman; Ensilage; John Harrison, the Chronometer Maker, by Samuel Smiles; The Water We Drink, by Professor Simpson, M. D.; Literary Notices, Foreign Literary Notes, Science and Art, and Miscellany. Published by E. R. Pelton, 25 Bond street, New York. Terms, $5 per year; single copy, 45 cents; trial subscription for three months, $1.

Lippincott's Magazine, for February, opens with a descriptive paper on Saragossa, by S. P. Scott, which is well written and attractively illustrated. Home Life in Bombay is graphic and lively. Dr. Wister's account of A Cruise Among the Windward Islands, is concluded in this number. Edward C. Bruce writes of Our Native Fauna in a very pleasant semi-scientific strain. This Our Brother, by Louise Seymour Houghton, depicts the condition and character of the freedman in Florida. The anonymous author of Beauty Versus Bric-a-Brac denounces the prevailing rage for rarities. In the second instalment of The Jewel in the Lotos, the separate threads developed in the first are gathered up and woven together, giving promise of a strong and well-sustained interest as the story proceeds. A Wayside Episode, by Rebecca Harding Davis, is written with characteristic vigor and many fine touches of humor and pathos. The Queer Service and a Work of Imagination are clever and amusing short stories, and the editorial departments are, as usual, well-filled. J. B. Lippincott & Co., Publishers, Philadelphia.

Arthur's Illustrated Home Magazine, for February, is filled with interesting and useful matter to every member of the household. Of all the home magazines published this ranks among the best. T. S. Arthur & Son, Publishers, Philadelphia.

The contents of the *Popular Science Monthly*, for February, are: The African in the United States, by Prof. E. W. Gilliam; A Prehistoric Cemetery, by Joseph F. [illegible], by Alexander Bain, LL. D.; Curiosities of Superstition, by Felix L. Oswald, M. D.; [illegible] by M. Alfred Fouillée; The Schools of Medicine, by R. D. Beard, M. D.; Brain Power in Education, and a sketch, with Portrait of Henry Milne-Edwards, and other interesting articles. Appleton & Co., New York, Publishers.

[illegible] as an Art Critic, with four engravings; Artists' Homes, Mr. Hubert Herkomer's, by Alice Meynell, with six engravings; The Pipes of All Peoples, by Harry V. [illegible] The [illegible] by Lord [illegible] [illegible] with ten [illegible] Publishers, New York.

The *Philadelphia Record* publishes for its [illegible] a very fine almanac containing [illegible] deal of [illegible] interesting information [illegible] pretty and artistic [illegible].

FOUR PANES OF GLASS.

ELIZABETH, afterwards Queen, when at large, had done her utmost to encourage the discontent against her half-sister Mary's government entertained by [illegible] of her subjects, although she did so with such caution and secrecy, that no real treason could be brought home to her.

When Queen Mary thought that the danger occasioned by the rebellion headed by Sir Thomas Wyatt was over, she was easily induced by her husband Philip to release her sister.

It was when leaving her place of confinement at Woodstock for the court, that Elizabeth took a diamond ring, and inscribed these words upon a window pane in the prison where she was kept:

> [illegible]
> Nothing proved can be,
> [illegible]

These lines, which exactly describe the princess's position, remained a standing protest against her involuntary detention at Woodstock.

Our second pane of glass belongs to some years later, when Elizabeth had already shown herself to be a prudent and prosperous sovereign, and when, as an old historian wrote, "Our lattices are grown into disuse, because glass is come to be so plentiful and within verie little so good cheape, if not better than any other."

It formed part of a window in a recess of one of the palace withdrawing-rooms, and must often have witnessed the stately [illegible] of Elizabeth, when engaged in deep [illegible] about the affairs of Church and State with the Lord Keeper Bacon, with Burleigh, Walsingham, and her other counsellors.

At times, however, it admitted the light of day to different scenes, when it pleased the maiden queen to lay aside her dignity, and to affect the airs and graces of a beauty and of a coquette with Leicester and with Essex, and to receive the adulations of be-ruffled and embroidered gallants.

Sir Walter Raleigh was not behind the others in his courtly graces, and we can imagine his shapely figure and handsome face among the gay throng.

On one of these occasions, absorbed in schemes of future greatness, the knight drew a ring set with a diamond from his finger, and inscribed ineffaceably upon the smooth surface of our pane of glass, the thought which was uppermost in mind: "Fain would I climb, but that I fear to fall."

A short time afterwards the queen herself observed the timid inscription, and willing to encourage the aspirant to fame, she formed a couplet by adding the counsel: "If thy heart fail thee, do not climb at all!" And truly Raleigh took her advice, for he never again hesitated to solicit any favor from the queen, but pressed forward in a bold and determined course to distinction.

A sadder cry comes from our third pane of glass, the story of which belongs to the spring of the year 1640.

It was a troublous time, when Englishmen were beginning to waver in their loyalty to their kind, whose force of character was not sufficient successfully to face the difficulties of the age.

For the time had come when the government of the Tudors was no longer tolerated by the subject, and Charles I., afterwards executed, would not abate what he held to his be God-given right.

On one of the windows of Whitehall, someone scratched these words: "God save the King, confound the Queen and her children, and give us the Palgrave to reign in [illegible]."

Of the fate of this pane of glass, which was thus made the unconscious medium of treason, we can speak without hesitation, for we are told that when it caught the King's eye, he dashed it into fragments [illegible].

Happily we can adduce to contrast with the above, a loyal inscription which also has in its history a tinge of romance rendering it doubly interesting.

In the year 1648, when Charles I. was [illegible] to fall a victim to his rebellious subjects, [illegible]

[illegible]

Young Osborne, [illegible] of the windows of the inn his opinion, by no means a flattering one, of the ruling powers.

For this act of malignancy the whole party were arrested and brought before the governor of the island.

The young man would, it is probable, have suffered for his obtrusive loyalty, had not his sister Dorothy, relying upon the consideration due to her sex, taken the [illegible] herself.

On [illegible] that a lady was the culprit, the Parliamentary officers dismissed the prisoners with a cautious reproof. But this did not end here, for Sir William Temple, attracted by the [illegible] conduct of the youthful heroine, conceived a dee[illegible] ment for Dorothy Osborne, and six years afterward married her.

◆

WHILE WAITING FOR A COUGH to go as it came, you are often laying the foundation for some Pulmonary or Bronchial affection. It is better to get rid of that cold at once by using that sure remedy Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, which will cure the most stubborn Cough and relieve you of all anxiety as to [illegible] consequences.

CONJURERS' MISTAKES.

IN olden days, devotees of the black art incurred [illegible] risk of being burned as wizards or ducked as witches, according [illegible] male and female, and of receiving their unpleasant tokens of popular disfavor. [illegible]

[illegible] conjurers are in the receipt of handsome incomes, they often meet with disagreeable little incidents in the exercise of their art.

The cleverest of conjurers fails at times to force the particular card he wishes, or finds his calculations otherwise upset; but he must not abandon the trick, or betray by the slightest hesitation or embarrassment that anything is wrong. As a rule, he will [illegible] what he is actually about, that when the moment comes for doing anything, it is already done as far as he is concerned; and the audience go away mystified with a sort of impression that he has executed no slight-of-hand at all, from the absence of any parade of rapid movement or manipulation.

Nevertheless, there are certain things which if they fail in any degree is [illegible], and bring the Professor to irretrievable grief.

The dissolving bird-cage is an example. This is an oblong cage about twelve inches in length by five in depth and breadth, made apparently of wire on all sides, which is held in the two hands right in front of or even amongst the audience, away from any table or screen. One, two, three! and it is gone; and the performer allows the spectators to examine him, to ascertain thereby that the cage has not been folded up flat by any means and concealed on his person.

The explanation is, that there is a double-rotating hinge or joint in the eight corners of the brass framework, which permits it to fold together end-wise, or rather, corner-wise, in the form of a spindle, the 'wire' of the sides—really black elastic—aiding this collapse by the tension when the framework is released from the oblong shape which is maintained by the hands.

Around the right wrist is fastened a strong silk cord, which passes up the arm inside the shirt, across the back and down the left arm, to be attached to a tiny ring, hidden by the ball of the thumb, at the lower and inner left hand corner of the cage, which forms one extremity of the spindle when collapsed. This cord is of just such a length that when the hands are holding the cage in front of the chest, the arms being bent and elbows close to the sides, it is comfortably taut.

Now, it will be seen that if the arms be extended, as they are suddenly and violently at the word "Three!" the cage being instantly collapsed at the same moment, the latter must necessarily be drawn up the shirt-sleeve, where it will lie along the arm, and allow the coat to be removed by the audience without fear of detection.

But it has happened more than once to the inventor himself to experience a hitch at the cuff, and to have the mortification of seeing his collapsed cage dangling ignominiously therefrom, amid the roars of all present.

A handkerchief or cloth is waved about, to show that it is empty and free from preparation; then it is held out across the hands and a glass globe, containing water and living gold-fish, is produced from under it; and this is repeated three or four times. 'Globes' they are called in the programme; but as a matter of fact they are very different from the aquaria for gold fish or anemones seen in our drawingrooms or greenhouses under that designation, being rather large glass saucers.

These are fitted with tight india-rubber covers, and, so protected, lie in two large pockets opening perpendicularly in the sides of the dress-coat, [illegible] behind. The cover is removed with the handkerchief. A very effective trick, and easy of execution, but a little apt to be [illegible] bursting of a receptacle, and a consequent cascade of water and wriggling fish down the magician's leg. I [illegible]

[illegible] dex, and is either ignited with a [illegible] match under the handkerchief, or has a little trigger with a phosphorous arrangement inside—the latter being a very dangerous dodge, as a French conjurer found to his cost the other day, in whose breast-pocket the whole affair took fire prematurely.

◆

What it Did for an Old Lady.

COSHOCTON STATION, N. Y., Dec. 18, 1878.

GENTS—A number of people have been using your Bitters here, and with marked effect. In one case, a lady of over seventy years, has been sick for years, and for the past ten years has not been able to be around half the time. About six months ago she got so feeble she was helpless. Her old remedies, or physicians, being of no avail, I sent to Deposit, forty-five miles away, and got a bottle of Hop Bitters. It improved her so she was able to dress herself and walk about the house. When she had taken the second bottle she was able to take care of her own room and walk out to her neighbors, and has improved all the time since. My wife and [illegible] have derived great benefit from their use.

W. B. HATHAWAY,
Agt. U. S. Ex. Co.

DR. RADWAY'S
SARSAPARILLIAN RESOLVENT.
The Great Blood Purifier.
FOR THE CURE OF CHRONIC DISEASE.
SCROFULOUS OR SYPHILITIC, HEREDITARY OR CONTAGIOUS,
[illegible] Dry Cough, Cancerous Affections, [illegible] Complaints, Bleeding of the Lungs, Dyspepsia, [illegible] Brash, White Swelling, Tumors, [illegible] Diseases, Female Complaints, [illegible]

For the cure of
SKIN DISEASES,
ERUPTIONS ON THE FACE AND BODY, PIMPLES, BLOTCHES, SALT RHEUM, OLD SORES, ULCERS, Dr Radway's Sarsaparillian Resolvent excels all remedial ag[illegible] blood, restoring health and vigor; clear skin and beautiful complexion secured to all.

Liver Complaints, Etc.,
Not only does the Sarsaparillian R[illegible] all remedial agents in the cure of Chr[illegible], Constitutional and Skin Diseases, but it is the only positive cure for

Kidney and Bladder Complaints
Urinary and Womb Diseases, Gravel [illegible] Bright's Disease, Albuminuria [illegible] there are brick-dust deposits, or the water is thick, cloudy or mixed with substances like the white of an [illegible] and where there is a pricking, burning sensation when passing water, and pain in the small of the back [illegible]

SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.
One bottle contains more of the active principles of medicine than any other preparation. Taken in Teaspoonful Doses, wh[illegible] five or six times as much. One Dollar Per Bottle.

R. R. R.
RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.
The Cheapest and Best Medicine for Family Use in the World.
COUGHS, COLDS, INFLAMMATIONS, FEVER AND AGUE CURED AND PREVENTED.
DR. RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.
RHEUMATISM, NEURALGIA, DIPHTHERIA, INFLUENZA, SORE THROAT, DIFFICULT BREATHING,
RELIEVED IN A FEW MINUTES
By Radways' Ready Relief.

MALARIA
IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS,
FEVER AND AGUE.
[illegible] PILLS so quick as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF. [illegible] Diarrhœa, or pai[illegible] bowels are stopped in fifteen or [illegible] inflammation, no weakness or lassitude [illegible] the use of the R. R. Relief.

ACHES AND PAINS.
[illegible] sick or nervous, tooth[illegible] sleeplessness, rheum[illegible]

RADWAY'S REGULATING PILLS.
Perfect Purgative, Soothing Aperient, Act Without Pain, Always Reliable, and Natural in Their Operations.
A VEGETABLE SUBSTITUTE FOR CALOMEL.
Perfectly Tasteless, elegantly coated with sweet [illegible]
RADWAY'S PILLS for the cure of all disorders of the Stomach, Liver, Bowels, Kidneys, Bladder, [illegible] mation of the Bowels, Piles, and all derangements of the Internal Viscera. Purely vegetable, containing [illegible]
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Our Young Folks.

THE LITTLE MISSIONARY.

BY M. VESTAL.

AT the foot of a sloping hill, a tiny spring, trickling into light, forced its way through the pebbles, that bound tightly the mellow earth, and dancing down the glade, met a little flower.

"Stay with me pretty water; if you go on farther you will be swept away by the torrent, and a mighty river will swallow you up."

The little streamlet trembled.

"What can I do," said she.

"These tiny drops are many and strong, they push me on.

"I am forced to go," and she murmured plaintively as she thought of the sad fate that awaited her.

"What is the matter, little streamlet," said the wind, as it swept over her shining surface.

She repeated the flower's warning.

"Oh," said the wind, "do not fear, everything is given something to do.

"You have your mission, and if you lie still, you will surely lose all your freshness.

"Go on, never fear, nothing will come to you that you will regret."

So the heart of the little brooklet swelled with joy, and she went surging softly on her way, wondering all along what she had to do, and when her mission would begin.

Through verdant fields where tall grasses nodded to each other across the sunlit ripples, by many a sturdy root, around mossy stones and feathery ferns, that met her with loving embrace, and coaxed her to stay, but she bade them good-bye, leaving behind a silvery mist, that like a gossamer curtain, covered them with memories of herself.

On she sped, through the woods, where bending branches overhead bowed their welcome with stately grace, where violets peeped above the mossy earth, and looked sweetly down with their lovely blue eyes.

"I must stop long enough to kiss the dear little things," and then leaving them [illegible] hazel [illegible], almost [illegible] the tiny [illegible].

[illegible] without even a warning.

"Where am I now?" she exclaimed.

"Is this the torrent that is to overwhelm me."

The bewildered streamlet struggled and foamed, and fighting as with an enemy to be overcome, she escaped at last, and found herself spreading into a broader expanse with bright bubbles on her bosom.

"Oh! what magnificent gems.

"They must have dropped from the rainbow.

Trembling with excitement she endeavored to take them all with her, but at a touch they disappeared in a most mysterious way.

"Have I been dreaming," murmured the streamlet:

"Here was my opportunity, and it is lost.

"These gems must have been above price, and would have done a world of good.

"In my eagerness I have spoiled all, or was it too great an honor for one as humble as myself, to bear so much that was rich and beautiful."

A little sigh of regret rippled her surface, and then regaining her wonted cheerfulness, [illegible].

Speeding on her way, she met a tired traveler who threw himself down, and drank eagerly of the refreshing flow.

Smiling, she welcomed the little birds that came to bathe in her sparkling waters.

Overflowing with pleasure, she watched the flocks and herds as they gathered and sipped from her banks.

Running under a fence she entered a meadow, and everything brightened at her approach.

Buttercups that lay like little drops of gold down deep in the grass, started up and spread out their burnished petals.

The tall red lilies waved their flaming banners, and numberless wild roses in lovely pink hats smiled a cordial welcome.

White anemones peeped out here and there until they shone like silver stars above the meadow grass.

Daisies innumerable wreathed her borders, and feathery grasses tossed their plumes in hearty glee.

She longed to remain a guest forever in the midst of so much beauty, but remembering the words the wind had whispered, she hastened on through beautiful grounds, where the luxuriance of the vines, vied in beauty with the hedges all abloom.

On she went, growing broader and fuller [illegible] came to the river that was to swallow her up.

"How grand!" said the brook.

[illegible] met and embraced the broad river and clear stream, and together swelled a pean of joy.

"My mission must done now in union with this grand river."

But the wind throwing himself at her feet whispered of all she had done, and the streamlet blushed rosy red to think how unconsciously she had been strewing blessings all along her way.

Can you tell me little children what was given the streamlet to do and what was her mission?

* * *

An Old-time Husking Bee.—Well, here we are in the big fragrant barn, with the forty lads and lasses.

There has been a clean sweeping between the mows, and the floor is as neat as the deck of a man-of-war.

It is 8 o'clock of a November evening—sharp without, to be sure, and a bit frosty within, but what care we, with our coats and caps and shawls and mittens on?

A goodly number of lanterns have been hung from the beams and over the doors and on a wire stretched between the mows, and it is light enough to see the red corn peeping through the curled edges of the husks, as they lie piled up in a great heap midway of the floor—light enough to see the glow of health on the cheeks of the boys and girls and to reveal the traces of the paint-pot and the burnt match and the powder rags, if there were any there.

The good man of the barn and his buxom dame go about shaking hands with the young people, and asking after the "folks," and when their "huskin'" is coming off" and how many cows they are milking, and so forth, without once troubling their heads about "introducing" their guests, or seeing that they are "paired off," which is a spontaneous process at country gatherings, and always happens of itself.

Later in the evening it is expected that [illegible].

[illegible] have long since passed [illegible] ure!

When the guests have all arrived, the boys go to work and pull great armfuls of hay from the mow, which they spread around the heap of corn.

Then each seats himself by his favorite girl, draws a bundle of husks into the hay between them and the husking begins.

Work is by no means suffered, however, to interfere with play.

The merry joke goes round; the stolen mitten travels about the circle and back to its owner at last.

If a girl happens to pull the husk from a dark-red ear, she must forfeit a kiss to the lad who is nearest or quickest to snatch it.

As fast as the ears are removed from the [illegible] pleasure [illegible] the larger heap [illegible] over.

It is wonderful to see how fast the mountain of unhusked corn is lowered, though the farmer and his boys keep bringing fresh basketfuls and piling them on the heap.

A perfect storm of the golden ears keeps raining on each pile of corn.

As the supply of material fails the contest waxes hotter.

The girls throw off their hoods and shawls, and the boys fling aside their overcoats.

The warm blood of health rushes to each cheek, and the faster the hands fly the brighter do the faces grow, and the last few ears are scrabbled for by the contending sides, and with shouts of merriment the husking is finished.

The victorious side is first served with refreshments.

Great platefuls of doughnuts and "fritters," and slices of snowy cake, pies cut in generous pieces, cider and apples, nuts and home-made candy are passed around.

The "old folks" come stamping in by twos and threes, and are immediately assailed with conflicting stories of individuals prowess and associate achievement, and then stuffed with good things to stop their laughing.

By 11.30 o'clock the festivities are over, and the merry company disperses two and two.

The farmer takes down the lanterns, closes the big barn and retires to the kitchen to smoke his pipe and calculate how many bushels of corn he will have when it is "off the ear."

* * *

Songs and Hymns.—"Come, ye sinners, poor and needy," sung to "Belmont," [illegible] brook," with the words [illegible] charming sound, [illegible], that it was early adapted [illegible] "Come, all my jolly sailors, all?" Is any one disturbed to be told that "Jesus, I my cross have taken," is sung to the old song, "Go, forget me, why should sorrow?" Is it necessary to put over the top of it as some do for a gentle apology, that it was "Mozart's favorite air?"

* * *

"Unbidden guests are often welcomest when they are gone." Disease is an unbidden guest which Kidney-Wort almost invariably "shows the door." Here is a case in point: "Mother has recovered," wrote an Illinois girl to her Eastern relatives. "She took bitters for a long time but without any good. So when she heard of the virtues of Kidney-Wort she got a box and it completely [illegible] as much work now as she could before we moved West. Since she got well every one about here is taking it."

HER BIRTHDAY.

BY WILSON BENNOR.

LAURA ALLEN sat alone at her grand piano, running her white fingers lightly over the ivory keys.

But the strains which fell from them were sad ones, and a shadow rested upon Laura's fair forehead, not wont to be there.

Sweet Laura had a gallant lover—ah, we have reached the shadow now.

A hasty word—a quick action thoughtlessly done, had thrown a coolness between them, and he had not been near her for a week.

To-day was her birthday.

Could it be that Frank would let it pass without one token of remembrance?

That would be pain too hard to bear.

Oh, no! he would come surely before the evening was over.

A ring at the door set her heart throbbing like a hammer.

She sat still, listening to Frank's step, proudly resolving not to show him how glad she was.

But no Frank appeared.

The maid who answered the bell came in, and crossing to Laura, she gave her a pretty rustic basket of flowers, saying—

"A boy left this for you, Miss Laura."

"Thank you, Ann," said Laura kindly, as she took the fragrant gift, the pain of her heart ceasing a little, for if not himself, this must be Frank's gift, and some token would be with it to show that he loved her still.

"Oh, how lovely!" she breathed, bending low to inhale the fragrance of the glossy rose in the centre, and looking lovingly at the great purple-headed pansies, the rich crimson rosebuds, pale tea-roses and bright geranium blooms, resting in a circle of odorous leaves.

"It must have been Frank," she whispered, searching eagerly amid the blossoms for card or note, but finding none.

"Still, I think he remembered my birthday, and sent it," she said, "If he did, he will show it the next time we meet, and I shall know he wants to be friends again."

She carried it to her room, and put it in a cool window, to keep it fresh and sweet for Frank's sake.

And the next evening at a small party, she met Frank himself.

He gave her a swift glance and she saw his face suddenly change and harden.

He gave her a cold bow and walked away, while Laura felt her heart grow faint in her breast, and her eyes were full of bitter pain.

But she was too proud to show it.

She chatted gaily, played and sung when requested, and longed for Frank to come and speak one word to her.

He did not come.

But late in the evening she paused with her escort close by where he stood with Gertie Lyon, and heard Miss Lyon tell him that she had lost that day while out riding a very valuable ring.

She heard Frank answer—

"I can sympathise with you, Miss Lyon. I lost a garnet ring to-day for which I would not have taken any money."

"What a pity! Have you an idea where you lost it?" asked Gertie Lyon.

"Not in the least," said Frank. "I was in twenty different places, and I visited all without success. The ring was my mother's, and I prized it very highly."

They passed on and Laura heard no more.

But she knew Frank's garnet ring well, and was sorry for his loss, even though he would not look at her.

When she got home, she took the basket of flowers from her window and watered it to keep it fresh.

"I will save you as long as I can for your own beauty, pretty things!" she said.

"I know now it was not Frank who sent you, and I don't care for the giver, but the gift is sweet, and I will keep it."

She did keep it, for more than a week by daily watering, and setting it on her outer window-sill to catch the dew at night.

And all this time Frank never came near her.

But at last the beautiful basket of flowers withered.

"I will keep the basket and the moss," said Laura, "for they are so pretty. But the poor blossoms are faded and dead, like my fond dreams.

"Ah, me!"

She flung the flowers from the window, and then took up the cushion of green moss, and shook it lightly to free it from the withered petals clinging to it.

Something glittered as she shook the moss, and fell with a ringing sound upon a small white paper lying at the bottom of the basket under the moss and flowers.

Oh, delight!

Frank did send the basket, for Frank's garnet ring was in her hand.

She had not only discovered that he had not forgotten her, but she could restore to him his lost treasure.

All this time it had been in her reach.

She snatched up the little paper, unfolded it, and read—

"Dear Laura,—

"I cannot bear this coldness. If my hasty words wounded you forgive me, darling—and take me back again. Wear some of these rosebuds in your hair at Mrs. Lyon's to-morrow night, and I shall know I am forgiven. Otherwise, I shall know I must bid hope farewell forever.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Now she knew why Frank was so cold at Gertie Lyon's party!

She remembered that she had worn a silver arrow in her hair.

A sharp, cruel arrow!

How unkind Frank must have thought her!

But it was not too late yet!

Frank should know this, and when he came, she could tell him so.

She flew to her desk, and wrote these words to him—

"Dear Frank,—

"By the oddest chance I have found your garnet ring. Will you come to me this evening and get it?

"Laura."

She dressed herself prettily, when evening came, and went down to the parlor to wait for Frank.

Not very long did she wait.

He came early, with some constraint in his manner, but trying to be friendly as ever.

Laura quietly laid the ring in his hand, and then his face lit up.

"It is really mine!" he said. "I am so glad.

"Where did you find it Laura?"

"In a basket," said Laura, coloring slightly.

"And I found something else there, too."

"Indeed.

"What was it?" asked Frank.

"A note, which you sent me on my birthday, and I never saw until to-day."

Frank caught her hand.

"Laura!"

"Is that true?"

"It is true, Frank," she said, meeting his eyes bravely.

"The basket was so pretty that I did not move the flowers until they had withered—not until to-day."

"Then you did not wear that sharp thing in your hair on purpose to wound me?"

"Oh, no! no!

"Frank——"

"Well, Laura, what?"

"Nothing only—if I had found the note I would have worn the rosebuds."

Frank caught her to his heart.

"Laura, are you mine again?"

"Yes, if you will take me."

Frank did "take her"—literally—and not many words could be spoken for a moment or two.

Then he said—

"Laura, you have found the ring—will you wear it until I replace it with a wedding-ring?"

"Yes, Frank."

He slipped it on her slender finger, and said—

"Guard it well, dear Laura, for it has re-united two true hearts."

* * *

A Man's Grandfather.—It is impossible for people to respect a man because he is the grandson of somebody else, or a woman because she had a grandmother whose name has become public property.

If a man is afraid to go through a graveyard after dark, how can it improve your opinion of him to hear that he is descended in a straight line from Richard of the Lion Heart?

All over the world are scattered people who never did anything to be proud of—the most commonplace of beings, who are the children of renowned men.

All over the world are great men whose names will be handed down to posterity, whose fathers were quiet, worthy people, and whose virtues were known only to their own families.

And there are doubtless excellent citizens, the best of men, some of whose progenitors have been hung.

"It was your father, then, who was so very plain?" said the joker to the man who was continually boasting of his mother's wonderful beauty.

And one often feels like asking a person who brags about his grandfather, "and what about the other one?"

"Besides, who is to get at the right ancestor to be descended from?

Each child has had two grandfathers and two grandmothers; four great-grandmothers and four great-grandfathers; eight great-great-grandmothers and eight great-great-grandfathers; and so on, doubling up every time.

The very little drop of inherited grandeur we get from the one we choose to pick out, who lived twenty generations ago, cannot really deserve to be thought much of.

The boast, "we came over in the Mayflower," which is so often heard, is something calculated to excite derision, when we begin to think how long ago the Mayflower "came over," and what a homœopathic [illegible] of the blood of the individual who did the same thing at the same time remains in the veins of the Tomkinses, Joneses, Smiths and Robinsons.

* * *

Two of [illegible] made of plaster-of-Paris flavored with an[illegible] were given to [illegible] poison [illegible] they were regarded by him and his younger brother with mingled awe and admiration; but a distant day their mother missed one. "Tom," said she, to the owner, who was [illegible]

* * *

[illegible] give perfect results. Any fashionable color, 10 cents.

SOMEBODY'S MOTHER.

The woman was old, and ragged, and gray,
And bent with the chill of the winter's day;

The street was wet with the winter's snow,
And the woman's feet were aged and slow.

She stood at the crossing and waited long,
Alone, uncared for, amid a throng

Of human beings, who passed her by,
Nor heeded the glance of her anxious eye.

Down the street with laughter and shout,
Glad in the freedom of school let out,

Came the boys like a flock of sheep,
Hailing the snow piled white and deep.

Past the woman so old and gray,
Hastened the children on their way,

Nor offered a helping hand to her,
So meek, so timid, afraid to stir,

Lest the carriage wheels or horse's feet
Should crowd her down in the slippery street.

At last came one of the merry troop
The gayest laddie of all the group.

He paused beside her, and whispered low;
"I'll help you across if you wish to go."

Her aged head on his strong young arm
She placed, and, without hurt or harm

He guided the trembling feet along,
Proud that his own were firm and strong.

Then back again to his friends he went,
His young heart happy and well content.

"She's somebody's mother, boys, you know,
For all she's old, and poor and slow;

And I hope some fellow will lend a hand
To help my mother, you understand,

If ever she's old, and poor, and gray,
When her own dear boy is far away."

And "somebody's mother" bowed low her head
In her home that night, and the prayer she said

Was "God be kind to the noble boy
Who is somebody's son, and pride, and joy."

INDIAN MARRIAGE MARKET.

OF the curiosities of Anglo-Indian literature there are none more amusing than the stories of matrimonial alliances in times past. It seems incredible, now, that a young lady could be shipped off like a parcel of goods, consigned to an agent in India; but such was the fate of many a girl, and it must be confessed that it was a destiny not unwillingly encountered. Nevertheless, what must have been the feelings of the young lady during the tedious time of the voyage to India, knowing that she was just as much sent out for sale as any of the packages among the cargo, and cognizant of the fact that certain pig-tailed and nankeen-breeched nabobs would be waiting at Garden Reach, Calcutta, or the Bunder, Bombay, to appraise her marriageable value the moment she landed?

By all accounts, the girls thus shipped to the East, along with the cadets, the black sheep of their families, accepted the situation philosophically.

Those who had no female relatives to look after them were placed under the charge of the captain, and it is a curious fact, denoting the manners and customs of the times, that one of the qualifications for the command of an Indiaman was the repuation in the trade as a male chaperon of young women. Certain captains were well known for the care they took of their interesting but difficult charges. Nor was the responsibility a light one. It is to be remembered that even as lately as thirty years ago the East Indiamen carried troops, and, of course, their fascinating red-coated officers as well; also cadets and midshipmen, who probably asked for nothing better than the opportunity of setting the commander's vigilance at defiance. Under the circumstances, and the surroundings, the poor captain must have resembled a hen with a brood of ducklings to look after, and he must have been Argus-eyed indeed to have prevented all flirtation between his young ladies and his young gentlemen on the voyage out.

We catch glimpses of the good man's difficulties in such old Indian novels as "Peregrine Pulteney," and in the sea journals of travelers of the period. First, the girls were pretty; otherwise, it would not have been much use to send them out to the Indian Marriage Market, at heavy expense in the way of outfit and passage; and secondly, they were freed from school, and consequently romantic. So, too, were the cadets and young officers on board. And thirdly, the monotony of life on board ship during a six months' voyage to India, round the Cape of Good Hope, was highly favorable to a development of the tender passion in hearts that were already fired with dreams of conquest and glory. No doubt, too, the sacrificial maidens put the future as much as possible out of their thoughts. It was no use looking forward to the wizened old judge or the jaundiced merchant prince at the end of the voyage. Better to make hay while the sun shines—with the cadets.

And so the captain had to be alert and ever vigilant, lest the cadets and midshipmen should be whispering with the young ladies through the port-holes, or, even worse, should snatch kisses from them in the dark holes and corners of his fine, frigate-built ship. In the novel above referred to an amusing account of the advantage taken from a storm is given. The heroine is destined for a wealthy old gentleman in Calcutta, but gets into a terrible flirtation with a cadet. And, as they choose to suppose that the ship is going to the bottom, they think it no harm to die in each other's arms, though the young lady's *fiancee* in Calcutta would probably have thought otherwise could he have seen them.

The splendid marriages, from a worldly point of view, that were made in those days must have been a sore temptation. Fifty years ago men could make fortunes in India—sometimes in a few years. And the girl who went out a tocherless lass might possibly return in a few years as the wife of an Indian millionaire, to astonish her old friends with her elegant diamonds and the lavish expenditure of her lord. The whole thing, in short, was a lottery, in which there were valuable prizes and few blanks. The girls carried all the beauty of penniless English families to market, the gentlemen their lakus of easily-won rupees.

Grains of Gold.

Nothing is so reasonable and cheap as good manners.

Peoples intentions can only be decided by their conduct.

All who joy would win must share it. Happiness was born a twin.

If a man talks of his misfortunes, there is something in them not disagreeable to him.

We seldom find people ungrateful as long as we are in a condition to do them a service.

It is astonishing how much easier it is to do evil than to be told of the evil we may have done.

The praises of others may be of use in teaching us not what we are but what we ought to be.

If there is any person to whom you feel a dislike, that is the person of whom you should never speak.

Virtue dwells at the head of the stream to which we cannot get except by rowing against the stream.

Happiness is a perfume that one cannot shed over another without a few drops falling on one's self.

We see how much a man has, and therefore envy him; did we we see how little he enjoys it we should pity him.

If our whole time was spent in amusing ourselves, we should find it more wearisome than the hardest day's work.

It is vain to gather virtues without humility, for the Spirit of God delighteth to dwell in the hearts of the humble.

What must be shall be; and that which is a necessity to him that struggles is little more than a choice to him that is willing.

When you fret and fume at the petty ills of life, remember that the wheels which go round without creaking last longest.

We ought to think much more of walking in the right path than of reaching our end. We should desire virtue more than success.

Censuring, with the desire to mortify, is very different from that suggestion of our errors which it is the office of friendship to give.

The first principle of true politeness is not to offend against such dispositions of the mind of others as are almost inseperable from our species.

This life is not ordained in vain; it is constituted for a grand purpose, if through the lessons of experience we become convinced that this life is not all.

Truth is a sure pledge not impaired, a shield never pierced, a flower that never dieth, a state that feareth no fortune, and a port that yields no danger.

That man is rich who has a good disposition—who is naturally kind, patient, cheerful, hopeful, and who has a flavor of wit and fun in his composition.

The essence of true nobility is neglect of self. Let the thought of self pass in, and the beauty of a great action is gone, like the bloom of a soiled flower.

Honor is but the reflection of a man's own action, shining bright in the face of all about him, and from thence rebounding brilliantly upon himself.

One never knows a man until he refuses him something and studies the effects of the refusal. One never knows himself until he has denied himself something.

Let him who regrets the loss of time make better use of it in the future. The most miserable pettifogger in the world is that of a man in the court of his own conscience.

Femininities.

Some men in marriage seek company rather than a companion.

There are no oaths that make so many perjurers as the vows of love.

"What is sweeter than taffy!" asked Angelina of Augustus. "My sweetheart," he replied; and she believed him.

Austria is still a long way behind the age. She has refused to allow women physicians to practice in her dominions.

A lady, who drew a gentleman's dressing-gown at a recent church fair, now wishes to draw a nice young man to put in it.

It was Longfellow who rather slyly described the lady as wearing flowers "on the congregation side of her bonnet."

"In the bright complexion of my youth I'll have no such word as pale," and she reached for the rouge-box with the clutch of an angel.

It is said that the first daily newspaper printed in the world was established and edited by a woman—Elizabeth Mallet—in London, 1702.

Said a doctor to a lady patient: "You must take exercise for your health, my dear." "All right," she said, "I'll jump at the first offer." And she did.

Young wives bring a good price in British India. A native inhabitant, who is 80 years old, has paid $30,000 for the hand of a bride of the tender age of 11.

Swear off on keeping your paper to yourself all the evening, and then wondering why your wife never knows anything about what is going on in the world.

Anxious maidens of an uncertain age should remember that we are on the high road to 1884. Leap year comes one year in four; then spinsters will have one chance more.

When a Southwark man and his wife engaged in a debate the other night, and the dog got up and scratched to be let out of the room, they thought it time to stop the discussion.

Within six years a happy English married pair have been blessed with triplets twice, doublets twice, and singlets twice. Folks are disposed to shun them for next-door neighbors.

After twenty years of abstruse cogitation on the subject, it occurs to a learned doctor of New York that very small feet on a woman mean a cayenne-pepper temper and a lying tongue.

A bright little girl, noticing among the company at her father's residence on a certain occasion a gentleman whose face was considerably pock-marked, inquired who the "moth-eaten gentleman was."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton advises billiards for girls of the period. If a girl handles a billiard-cue as dexterously as she throws a stone, the man four feet to the left of her is likely to have an eye poked out.

"Oh, Henry, I had such a delightful dream. I dreamt I had such a love of a bonnet sent me." "Isn't it singular, my dear, that I had the nightmare, and dreamt I had to pay the bill," said the husband.

A Chicago lady once applied to a learned judge for a divorce. "What is the name of the husband?" inquired the learned judge. "I have no husband as yet, but inasmuch as I contemplate matrimony, I feel as though I should be prepared for the worst."

It is doubtless a thirst for "realism" that permits an audience to applaud a sentiment like this, recently given voice by a woman in a French drama performed in this city: "Women are true to each other under but two conditions—as accomplices or enemies."

A young woman living in Dayton, O., had her fortune told by an itinerant astrologer, and was so impressed with what he told her of her future that she became insane, and was killed a few days later by a railroad train while wandering about the country.

A man of this city, on being told by his clergyman that during Lent he should give up something which he highly prized, he determined after long wrestling with himself that when the time comes he will manfully surrender to his wife his night-key.

Think of this, ye distressed housewives who change "help" every week. In Germany, during the past six years, the reward of the "golden cross," given only to women who have served in one family for forty years or more, has been bestowed on 393 women.

"How do you feel, my little man?" asked a youth of his sweetheart's little brother. The young fiend looked up at him sidewise, and, with a grin, responded: "I feel just as if I'd like to have a dime." He got it, but his prospective brother-in-law now avoids the health question.

Just before last New Year's day a lady in New York secured a piano on trial, in order that her New Year's callers might believe she possessed that luxury, and so as to have the free use of it on visitors' day. It is needless to say that the piano agent was shortly afterwards informed that the instrument was not wanted. It had served the "smart" lady's purpose.

A marriage ceremony came to an abrupt and ludicrous termination the other day in Atlanta, Ga. A prominent clergyman of that city having consented to unite a colored couple, had just asked the solemn question, "Wilt thou take this woman?" etc., when an old flame of the bridegroom poked her head into the room and said, "Henry, I jess dare you to say yes." Henry sank into the nearest chair without saying a word, and the company thoughtfully withdrew.

In Naples a kind of wife market is held in connection with the Foundling Hospital every year. All the marriageable girls in the institution assemble in a certain room, to which a number of young men of good character have access. Offer of marriage on the part of any young man is conveyed by allowing his handkerchief to drop before the object of his choice as he passes by. If the girl picks it up she therefore signifies her acceptance, but her refusal if she allows it to remain.

News Notes.

Salina, Kans., claims an 80-pound hail-stone.

Gustave Dore, the famous French painter, is dead.

An Auburn lawyer has accumulated $800 in dimes.

Queen Victoria has a lady dentist attached to her court.

375,000 persons work under ground in Great Britain.

The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church has over 100,000 members.

An Ohio legislator will propose the whipping-post for wife-beaters.

The Sword of the Spirit, a new paper, has been unsheathed in Michigan.

A negro babe, with a fully-developed set of teeth, was born near Athens, Ga.

A New York policeman died last week from the effects of a bite of another man.

A Georgia octogenarian is living with his ninth wife, and is the father of fifty-three children.

Last November out of 4,400 burials which occurred in Paris, 1,257 were devoid of religious ceremony.

A widow of fifty-three is a regular attendant as a pupil in a Greensboro, North Carolina, school.

Allerburg & Co., of Pittsburg, this State, have taken out a patent for glass shingles to be laid like slate.

Lieut. Flipper, the colored officer who joined the Mexican army, has been promoted to a Brigadier.

A very serious encounter, arising out of a snowball fight, lately took place between two English regiments.

English investors are much exercised about the discovery of alleged new gold mines in Guatemala.

Bernard Doran, janitor of a grammar school in New York, died recently at the alleged age of 110 years.

No less than twenty-two hundred revolvers were pledged for loans at one Chicago pawn-shop last year.

An express agent in Louisville, Ky., refused to deliver a corpse until the freight, amounting to $1.50, was paid.

The French Society for Preventing Accidents from Machines has investigated circular saws and condemned them.

Wasps are beset by the danger of spontaneous combustion—the wax and the paper of the nests making tinder and fuel.

Mrs. Hopkins, of San Francisco, gave her niece, who recently married her adopted son, $100,000 as a wedding present.

Mrs. Langtry says she came to America to make money, and good authority has it that she has cleared over $50,000 thus far.

Since the Milwaukee fire, patents for 19 new life-saving inventions for use at hotel fires have been applied for at Washington.

Cincinnati barbers purpose holding what they call a tournament, with prizes for the most expert wielders of the razor and shears.

A cremation furnace in Gotha has turned into ashes during the past four years more than a hundred bodies. Twenty-five per cent of them were men.

At Cairo, Ill., a traveling drummer winked at a Mrs. Rogers. Mr. Rogers then punched the drummer's eyes so that he couldn't wink at all. And then another drummer broke in Mr. Rogers' head.

Gambetta's brain weighed but thirty-three and one-third ounces, being sixteen ounces lighter than the average weight of the brain of an adult, and yet over 200,000 persons followed him to the grave.

Hoarseness and tickling in the throat are best relieved by the gargle of the white of an egg beaten to a froth in half a glass of warmed, sweetened water.

In the London Hospital in five years of amputation under the old process one man in seven died. In five years of the new antiseptic method one in fifty.

Dr. Thomas Taylor, of Washington, has found that house-flies distribute infectious diseases. It has been known for a long time that they diffuse profanity.

The American Grocer says there were 53,322,532 cans of tomatoes put up in the United States in 1882. The bulk of the business is done in Maryland and Virginia.

"Tommy Harrison, the reverend boy, has captured 220 souls at Decatur," is the way a Western paper tells the fact that the Rev. Mr. Harrison has made 20 converts.

Prince Charles of Prussia, who died recently, was an inveterate smoker, but doesn't seem to have shortened his life by the practice, for he was 82 years old when he departed this life.

Pope Leo XII. has made his will, and consigned it to the Deacon of the college of Apostolic Prothonotaries. It is said that the instrument gives the greater part of his property for the furtherance of education.

A family of eight persons in Cleveland county, Alabama, drink nine gallons of coffee a day—three at each meal. They paid last year as much for tobacco as bacon. The males took tobacco, and the girls dipped snuff.

◆

Emigrants and travelers will find in Ayer's Sarsaparilla an effectual cure for the eruptions, boils, pimples, eczema, etc., that break out on the skin—the effects of disorder in the blood caused by sea-diet and life on board ship. It is the best medicine for everyone in the spring.

THE LITTLE BANANA PEEL.

Like a bar of beaten gold
  I gleam in the summer's sun;
I am little, I know, but I think I can throw
  A man that will weigh a ton.
I send out no challenges bold,
  I blow me no vaunting horn,
But foolish is he who treadeth on me;
  He'll wish he had ne'er been born.

Like a flower of the field, vain man
  Goeth forth at the break of day,
But when he shall feel my grip on his heel
  Like the stubble he fadeth away;
For I lift him high up in the air,
  With his heels where his head ought to go;
With a down-coming crash he maketh his mash,
  And I know he's clear gone upon me.

I am scorned by the man who buys me;
  I am modest, and quiet, and meek;
Though my talents are few, yet the work that I do,
  Has oft made the cellar-doors creak.
I'm a blood-red Republican born,
  And a Nihilist fearless I be;
Though the head wear a crown, I would bring its pride down,
  If it set its proud heel upon me.

—R. J. BURDETTE.

Facetiæ.

Get gold if you can, young man; but beware of guilt.

It is the butcher who knows how to make a little go a great weigh.

By always listening to other people you may forget that you have something to say yourself.

The French word for law is placed in the feminine gender. This is because the law is so fearfully uncertain.

China and Japan buy our dried apples freely. Thus does American industry help to swell the population of the Orient.

The simplest and most economical way of taking a census of the children of a neighborhood, is to employ an organ-grinder for five minutes.

At a town meeting a large tax payer rose up to protest against the building of a new schoolhouse in a certain part of the town. "What's the good of it?" asked he. "They are an ignorant set down there, anyhow."

Between two worthy country neighbors meeting on the boulevards: "What, you here! How long have you been in Paris?" "A week." "And do you enjoy it?" "I should think I did I wear my Sunday clothes every day."

A miniature railroad is now being sold at the low price of $15, and the trains are so delicately made that a misplaced switch will smash things all to pieces just the same as on a real railroad. Toy-makers are evidently keeping abreast of the times.

General Lee is said to have asked a straggler whom he found eating green persimmons if he did not know they were unfit for food. "I'm not eating them for food, General," replied the man; "I am eating them to draw up my stomach to fit my rations."

Said a chairman to the rural member, "The gentleman is out of order." "Out of order, am I?" indignantly replied the member. "Old boss, if you'll just come to the back of the building I'll convince you that I'm in as good order as any man in the State!"

Little Paul is at the Zoological Gardens, in front of the monkey cages. Perceiving a youth dressed in most remarkable style, who is coming toward him, he clings close to his mother's dress. "O, mamma!" he cries, "here is one who has got out of his cage!"

"Mother Swan's Worm Syrup" for feverishness, restlessness, worms, constipation, tasteless. 25c.

We read frequently of some person whose hair has turned white in a single night through grief or fear, but the white-haired man who goes into a barber-shop, and comes out in half an hour with hair and whiskers black as the raven's wing, never gets a line in the paper.

"Rough on Rats." Clears out rats, mice, flies, roaches, bed-bugs, ants, vermin, chipmunks. 15cts.

A tack is a simple, unpretentious sort of a young nail, noted for its keen repartee when pressed for a reply, and possessing the peculiar power, when standing on its head, of causing the cold shivers to run down the back of a man in mere anticipation of what might be.

Skinny Men.—"Wells' Health Renewer" restores health and vigor, cures Dyspepsia. $1.

"Ugh!" exclaimed Brown, "I believe I shall freeze to death; but I've got to die sometime," he added, "and I might as well die that way as any other." "Much better," replied Fogg, consolingly, "you'll have such an excellent chance to thaw out on the other side, you know."

◆

24-Stop Organs for $50.

The offer made in this issue of THE POST by Mayor Beatty, of Washington, New Jersey, of a 24-Stop Organ for $50, delivered at your very door, is one that lasts but 10 days from the date of this newspaper, and our readers should take advantage of it at once. The well-won reputation of the house assures buyers that they will get just what he advertises; and the price, with all freight prepaid, should give him, as it will, thousands of additional satisfied customers. We are informed by good authority that Mr. Beatty is manufacturing and shipping sixty-nine organs daily, and running his factory nights in order to fill orders promptly.

The Washington (New Jersey) *Star* says:

The Hon. John Hill, member of Congress of Boonton, New Jersey, accompanied by his wife, visited the Beatty Organ Factory, at Washington, New Jersey, on Tuesday last. He expressed himself as not only at half a million, is an example of what can be done gratified, but astonished, at the extent and activity of Mayor Beatty's Organ Works. The prejudice which every young business man has to confront whose success is rapidly achieved, is giving way before Mayor Beatty, and his wonderful business capacity is coming to be generally recognized and acknowledged. We clip the following editorial from last week's *Christian at Work*:

"Hon. Daniel F. Beatty, whose indefatigable pluck has raised him from a poor boy to a reputed fortune by fair dealing and persistent effort. He has the largest organ factory in the country, and makes from fifty to sixty instruments daily."

◆

A MEETING of the stockholders of *Our Continent* Publishing Company will be held at the office of said Company, in the city of Philadelphia on the twenty-sixth day of March, 1883, to elect officers and vote upon an increase and preference of stock.
By order of the Board of Directors.
Jan. 22, 1883, H. W. B. HOWARD, Sec'y.

◆

Superfluous Hair.
Madame Wambold's Specific permanently removes Superfluous Hair without injuring the skin. Send for circular. Madame WAMBOLD, 34 Sawyer Street, Boston, Mass.

◆

☞ When our readers answer any Advertisement found in these columns they will confer a favor on the Publisher and the advertiser by naming the Saturday Evening Post.

THE MILD POWER
CURES
HUMPHREYS HOMEOPATHIC SPECIFICS
In use twenty years. The most safe, simple, economical and efficient medicine known. Dr. Humphreys' Book on Disease and its Cure (144 pp.) also Illustrated Catalogue sent free. Humphreys Homeopathic Medicine Co., 109 Fulton St., New York

KIDNEY-WORT
HAS BEEN PROVED
The SUREST CURE for
KIDNEY DISEASES.
Does a lame back or disordered urine indicate that you are a victim? THEN DO NOT HESITATE; use Kidney-Wort at once, (druggists recommend it) and it will speedily overcome the disease and restore healthy action.
Ladies. For complaints peculiar to your sex, such as pain and weaknesses, Kidney-Wort is unsurpassed, as it will act promptly and safely.
Either Sex. Incontinence, retention of urine, brick dust or ropy deposits, and dull dragging pains, all speedily yield to its curative power.
☞ SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS. Price $1.
Acts at the Same Time on Kidneys, Liver and Bowels.
KIDNEY-WORT

I have *prescribed* Kidney-Wort *with very great success* in a score or more obstinate cases of Kidney and Liver Troubles, also for female weaknesses.—Philip C. Ballou, M. D., Monkton, Vt.

"My wife has been *much benefited* from the use of Kidney-Wort. She had kidney and other complaints," writes Rev. A. B. Coleman, Fayetteville, Tenn.

KIDNEY-WORT
IS A SURE CURE
for all diseases of the Kidneys and
—LIVER—
It has specific action on this most important organ, enabling it to throw off torpidity and inaction, stimulating the healthy secretion of the Bile, and by keeping the bowels in free condition, effecting its regular discharge.
Malaria. If you are suffering from malaria, have the chills, are bilious, dyspeptic, or constipated, Kidney-Wort will surely relieve and quickly cure.
In the Spring to cleanse the System, every one should take a thorough course of it.
☞ SOLD BY DRUGGISTS. Price $1.
KIDNEY-WORT

"I am a living advocate of the virtues of Kidney-Wort. I suffered untold agony from liver disorder *It cured me.*"—Jno. D. Nevins, Springfield, Ohio.

KIDNEY-WORT
FOR THE PERMANENT CURE OF
CONSTIPATION.
No other disease is so prevalent in this country as Constipation, and no remedy has ever equalled the celebrated Kidney-Wort as a cure. Whatever the cause, however obstinate the case, this remedy will overcome it.
PILES. THIS distressing complaint is very apt to be complicated with constipation. Kidney-Wort strengthens the weakened parts and quickly cures all kinds of Piles even when physicians and medicines have before failed.
☞ ☞ If you have either of these troubles
PRICE $1. USE Druggists Sell
Acts at the Same Time on Kidneys, Liver and Bowels.
KIDNEY-WORT

"Constipation, in all its forms, yields to Kidney-Wort. In female diseases it is very successful."—Dr. Philip C. Ballou, Monkton, Vt. Apr. 29-82.

KIDNEY-WORT
THE GREAT CURE
FOR
—R-H-E-U-M-A-T-I-S-M—
As it is for all the painful diseases of the
KIDNEYS, LIVER AND BOWELS.
It cleanses the system of the acrid poison that causes the dreadful suffering which only the victims of Rheumatism can realize.
THOUSANDS OF CASES
of the worst forms of this terrible disease have been quickly relieved, and in short time
PERFECTLY CURED.
PRICE, $1. LIQUID OR DRY, SOLD BY DRUGGISTS.
☞ Dry can be sent by mail.
WELLS, RICHARDSON & Co., Burlington Vt
Acts at the Same Time on Kidneys, Liver and Bowels.
KIDNEY-WORT

"I could find no remedy for my kidney complaint and rheumatism," writes Mr. A. B. Burr, of Temple's Mill, Florida, "until *I was cured* by Kidney-Wort." Exposure, incident to lumbering, caused Mr. Burr's disorders.

40 Chromo Visiting Cards, no 2 alike, for 1883, name on, and illustrated premium list, 10c., warranted best sold. Agents wanted. L. Jones & Co., Nassau, N. Y.

60 Gold Edge Chromo and Fan Visiting Cards, no 2 alike, name on 10c. E. HALL & CO., Meriden, Ct.

READ THIS LETTER
FROM THE
HON. DANIEL F. BEATTY,
Mayor of Washington, N. J.

June 3d, 1882.

DR. J. H. SCHENCK,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:—I send you this letter as a tribute of the regard in which I hold your valuable medicines. It gives me pleasure to testify in favor of what possesses genuine worth. Several cases proving the efficacy of your medicines have come under my notice, one of them being that of Mr. Joseph Foddle, a gentleman employed in my establishment. He was afflicted with what was supposed to be Consumption. The local physician did not appear to help him. I got him to use your Pulmonic Syrup, Seaweed Tonic and Mandrake Pills, from which he received immediate help. I can now happily state that he has been able to return to his office duties, and that his health is better than it had been for years.

My brother, Capt. Mansfield H. Beatty, is also a firm believer in the healing power of your medicines, he having frequently used them in his family. Hoping that this testimonial may influence some poor sufferer to seek relief in your remedies, I am

Yours Truly,
DANIEL F. BEATTY,
Manufacturer of Pianos and Organs.

Dr. Schenck's medicines are sold by all druggists. His book on Consumption, Liver Complaint, and Dyspepsia, is sent free to all. Address,
DR. J. H. SCHENCK & SON,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Landreth's Earliest Cabbage
Ten days earlier than any other cabbage, and producing well-formed conical heads remarkably large size for so early a ripener. Whoever plants it will be amazed at its early maturity; and if he be a market-gardener, will be able to place it in the market ahead of all competitors.
We have reports of this variety reaching ten pounds in weight, remarkable considering its extreme earliness.
LANDRETH'S RURAL REGISTER AND ALMANAC, containing full catalogue of Landreth's Celebrated Garden, Field, and Flower seeds, with directions for culture in English and German. Also, catalogue of implements and tools, free of charge.
Price lists, wholesale and retail, furnished upon application. Landreth's seeds are in sealed packages, with name and full directions for culture.
D. LANDRETH & SONS,
Nos. 21 and 23 South Sixth Street, between Market and Chestnut Streets, and Delaware Avenue and Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pa.

DRY GOODS
BY MAIL!
Over Three-Quarters of a Million in Stock.
All bought for cash, and sold at lowest city prices.
Dress Goods, Silks, Shawls, Trimmings, Hosiery, Upholstery, Fancy Goods, Ladies' Dresses, Wraps, Underwear, Ties, Laces, Gents' Furnishing Goods, Infants', Boys' and Girls' Outfits, &c. Samples, information, and "SHOPPING GUIDE" free on application.
COOPER & CONARD, 9th & Market St., Philada.
☞ Please say where you saw this Advertisement.

LODER'S
DIGESTIVE POWDER.
Certain Cure for Dyspepsia or Indigestion, Heartburn, Sour Stomach, Fetid Breath, Constipation, &c. 50 and $1. mailed.
C. G. A. LODER, Apothecary,
1539 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.

BERTRAN'S EVERLASTING PERFUME,
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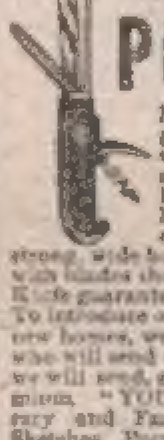

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"Presenting the Bride" Heard From

Brownwood, Tex., Jan. 3, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," came to hand all right. I cannot find language to express my thanks to you for the beautiful premium. I have received many premiums, but yours leads them all. Will send some subscriptions soon.

M. E. N.

McArthur, O., Jan. 1, '83.

Editor Post—Your premium, "Presenting the Bride," is indeed a beautiful gift of art, and cannot fail to please the most fastidious. Many thanks.

A. M. W.

Shenandoah, Ia., Dec. 28, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," was duly received, and am more than pleased with it. It is by far the handsomest picture I ever saw.

J. C. W.

Old Fort, N. C., Jan. 8, '83.

Editor Post—The picture premium, "Presenting the Bride," received. It is beautiful, and I am very much pleased with it. All who have seen the picture think it is just superb. Expect to get you numerous subscribers in a few days.

M. J. B.

Malden, Mass., Jan. 7, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—The picture, "Presenting the Bride," has come to hand, and in good condition. I am much pleased with it, indeed. I have shown it to some of my neighbors, and they all unite with me in voting it beautiful. Will send you some subscribers soon.

M. L. H.

Delevan, Minn., Dec. 29, '83.

Editor Post—I received the picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and all who have seen it are delighted with it. You may look for some subscribers from me shortly, as many of my friends expressed a desire to subscribe, and how could they feel otherwise, with such a paper, and such a premium!

J. M. A.

Charleston, S. C., Jan. 1, 83,

Editor Post—Have received my picture, "Presenting the Bride," and was surprised at its marvelous beauty. I am well pleased with it. I have shown it to several of my friends, and all say it is the handsomest and most valuable premium they ever saw.

E. B. S.

Stevensburg, Mich., Jan. 6, '83.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Your magnificent premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," at hand, and think it very beautiful. I am greatly pleased with it, and thank you very much for such a beautiful present. I have shown it to quite a number of people, and they all say it is the prettiest and richest premium they have ever had the pleasure of beholding. Will do all that lies in my power to increase your subscription list.

H. B.

Good Luck, Ark., Dec. 26, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—My beautiful premium Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," came duly to hand, and it is even better than you claimed it to be. I will see what I can do for you in the way of new subscribers.

M. R. W.

Seymour, Ct., Dec. 29, '82.

Editor Post—I have received premium, "Presenting the Bride." It far surpasses my most sanguine expectations—perfectly lovely! Will get some subscribers for you.

A. A. C.

Bagdad, Ky., Dec. 24, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—I received the beautiful picture, "Presenting the Bride," in due time, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of my most sanguine expectations. Shall see what I can do for you in the way of subscribers.

M. E. B.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 28, '83.

Editor Post—"Presenting the Bride" was delivered to me yesterday, and am highly pleased with it. We consider it a gem. Have given it a conspicuous place in our gallery for the inspection of our friends.

D. T.

Grenada, Miss., Dec. 25, '82.

Editor Saturday Evening Post—Paper and premium received. THE POST is a splendid literary journal. And the picture is very handsome. Am greatly pleased with it. Everyone who has seen the picture considers it grand.

V. I. F.

Janesport, Mo., Dec. 28, '82.

Editors Post—I received my premium for The Post, for which accept thanks. It is the most beautiful premium I ever saw.

A. D.

Flemington, Ky., Dec. 29, '82.

Editor Post—I received your premium picture yesterday all sound, and am very much pleased with it. It is far ahead of the premiums usually offered by newspapers, and certainly ought to bring you many subscribers. Am quite proud of it.

M. I. V.

Offutt, Tenn., Dec. 30, '82.

Editor Post—I received my Photo-Oleograph, "Presenting the Bride," and think it very beautiful. Had it framed and hung up two hours after its arrival. It is admired by everybody.

W. A. K.

Oakley, Idaho, Dec. 27, '82.

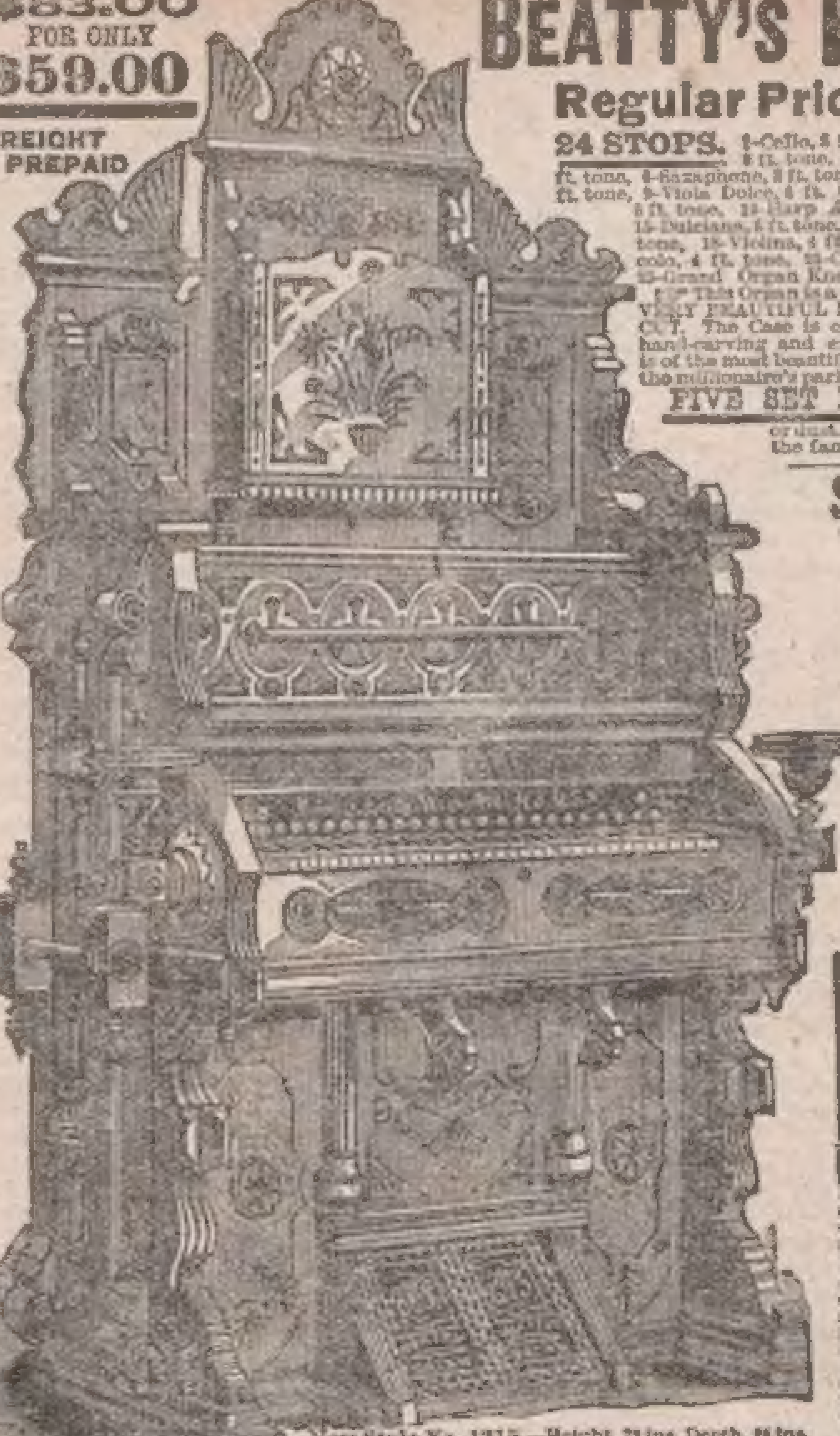
Editor Post—I received my premium last night, and think it very beautiful. I will with pleasure aid you in raising your subscription list, and I think I can get a great many subscribers for you.

J. M. S.

Bangor, Mich., Dec. 30, '82.

Editor Post—The premium picture, "Presenting the Bride," received, and I consider it grand. I have shown it to several of my friends, and each and every one of them pronounce it beautiful.

H. E. O.



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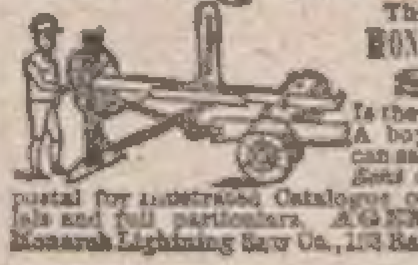

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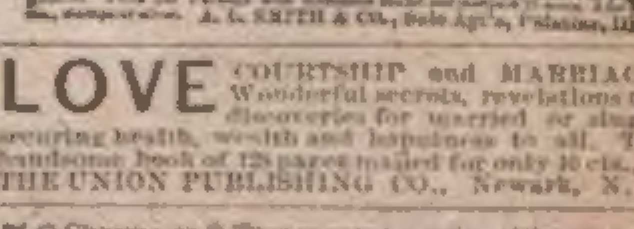

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

FANCY DRESSES.

FOR the next few weeks the minds of the general ball-going public will be more or less occupied with the making and wearing of "Fancy Dresses" of all descriptions and tints.

January and February are seasons of the year especially consecrated to such matters; then fancy dress balls take precedence of all others; and as the dresses are hideous when carelessly designed, and still more indifferently executed, so they can be, and are, quite lovely, when judiciously arranged and carefully carried out.

To the clever and inventive mind such toilets may be correctly fulfilled in every detail.

Unless a taste for effect and color is possessed on the part of both designer and wearer, good effects are manifestly an utter impossibility; but, granted that these two essentials exists, even in the most minute and unassuming degree, in the hearts of these important personages, then a most delightful *tout ensemble* may be realized.

With these few remarks, I will describe in fullest detail some lovely "Fancy Dresses."

An Elizabethan Peasant's Dress.—Nut brown cashmere over a petticoat of rose fragonard satin; the body is carre, but is filled in with white muslin to the throat; the front of the bodice is of rose satin, laced across with cords of nut brown silk.

The sleeves are puffed, and finished with deep white muslin cuffs.

The stockings are of brown silk, with low black leather shoes embroidered in silver.

The cap is a high one of white muslin, edged with lace.

The same dress is lovely in crimson and pale blue.

A Costume Pompadour. — Petticoat of white satin with deep lace flounces; trained skirt of crimson satin, opened in front to show the petticoat, and edged at the sides where it is fastened on to the petticoat with a deep band of crimson roses with frosted leaves.

The body is square, with a stomacher entirely of roses, with a diamond—if you can afford it, if not, a paste—"St. Esprit" among them.

The elbow sleeves are trimmed with lace that matches the flounces, and large knots of roses.

The hair is powdered—a wig may be worn if preferred,—done in a mass of soft curls at the back; a knot of roses and a large paste, or diamond "St. Esprit" complete the lovely toilet.

Round the neck and arms a broad band of black velvet with diamond buckles. The stockings are white silk, with crimson roses embroidered upon them.

The shoes are crimson satin, with diamond buckles.

The handkerchief is trimmed with a deep border of lace to match the flounces.

The fan is very large, of white satin, with curved mother-o'-pearl sticks inlaid with gold, the satin being embroidered with roses, a large knot of them is fastened to one side of the fan, a small looking-glass is let into the other. The mittens are white lace.

Three small black patches are carefully dispersed upon the face.

If carried out like this, no prettier costume can be found.

The Ferryman's Daughter.—A long plain dress of white Indian muslin, gathered in the waist. The sleeves ruffled and turned back to the elbow, showing the arm.

A large straw hat, trimmed with a wreath of "Marguerites des Champs," a knot of these flowers fastened with blue ribbon at the throat, and an "Oar" in the band.

The White Cat.—A skirt entirely of white fur, the body of the same, also the elbow sleeves.

On the head a cap made of cat's skin, the head forming the front; a large stuffed cat perched on the right shoulder.

White silk stockings, white fur boots, and a gold wicker basket on the arm, with white kittens, and on it embroidered "Three Little Kittens."

Good Queen Bess.—A dress of lemon satin; the back is made quite plain, the front is of violet satin, with a trellis work of very narrow silver braid, divided everywhere by large pearls, black and white.

The petticoat is fastened to the train by a band of the two colored pearls. The body is high to the throat, pointed back and front.

The corsage of violet satin and pearls like the petticoat.

Round the neck is a small close ruff. The sleeves are of alternate puffs of lemon and violet satin, divided by narrow silver braid and pearls, and finished at the wrists by ruffles of old point.

From the girdle of pearls depends a violet ostrich feather fan, with a looking-glass set in the centre, the fan should be round, and a bag of violet satin with the Royal arms embroidered on it, out of which peeps the embroidered gloves and handkerchief.

On the head, either a Marie Stuart cap of black velvet, with a border of pearls, or a small crown of gold and jewels.

Fleur des Champs.— A short skirt of brown satin, over it skirt upon skirt of brown tulle, coffee-colored tulle is even prettier.

The bodice is of coffee-colored satin, with every imaginable wild flower, daisies, buttercups, poppies of all colors, corn-flowers, wild geraniums, corn, wheat, barley, grass, in raised velvet upon the "fond."

The bodice is cut low with short sleeves, it is pointed back and front.

The berthe is composed of the same flower in velvet.

A tunic of the flowers in velvet is carelessly flung over the skirt of tulle, the flowers being connected by velvet butterflies of every hue, lady-birds, and beetles; at the back a sash of all the different colors in striped satin.

On the left shoulder an enormous blue butterfly, the wings being powdered with silver so that they sparkle like diamonds.

The necklace, bracelets, and earrings are of enamelled butterflies, connected by wild flowers; a tiara of butterflies in the hair.

A coffee-colored satin fan, embroidered to match the dress, stockings and shoes also, and an enormous square bouquet of Fleur des Champs, with butterflies and lady-birds mounted on invisible wire, and seeming as if they had just lit upon the flowers.

For gentlemen, the following are to be recommended:

"A Cordon Bleu" Jacket, cap, and trousers of white satin, white silk stockings and white shoes.

On the arm a large basket with lobsters, mackerel, prawns, chickens, ducks, eggs, loaves of bread, vegetables of all descriptions, grapes, peaches, apples, pears, melons, etc.

From the waist depends, by a white silk cord, a cook's knife and larding-pin.

The collar and sleeves have saucepans, frying-pans, gridirons, etc., painted upon them in "Prout's brown," in the other hand is carried a copy of Francatelli or Gouffe's book.

This dress can be varied by having recipes printed on the back of the jacket, such as "Croutes aux Moelle Potage Chausseur," "Ecrevisses a la Bordelaise," "Homard a l'Americaine," "Glace aux Peches," "Saumon en Surprise;" and on the front of the coat one side, a menu as follows:

"Mutton Broth," "Sprats," "Liver and Bacon," "Saddle of Mutton," "Goose," "Grouse," "Plum Pudding," "Mince Pies," "Toast and Cheese;" and on the other, "Potage Bonne Femme," "Filet de Sole, a la Cardinal," "Turbot sauce Hollandaise," "Cotelettes a la Contesse," "Foie gras en Aspic," "Dinde a la Cipolata," "Selle de Mouton de Galles," "Jambon de York," "Ponche a la Romaine," "Becasses," "Pommes de Terre souffleo," "Glace aux Citron," "Tartelette aux Peches;" "Pailles aux Parmesan," "Homard a l'Americaine," thus illustrating the dinners of England and France.

Another is "a Vandyke Dress." A low jacket of violet velvet open in front, showing a full cambric shirt, knee-breeches of white velvet, high boots, cuffs and collars of old point lace, and sword-belt of black leather, a black felt hat with a very broad brim, and an ostrich feather of violet, tipped with white.

A Venetian Nobleman.—A doublet, black satin gemmed with crystals which shine like diamonds; a short cloak, for the shoulders, of white velvet, similarly studded and lined with orange satin, orange satin hose, black velvet shoes, and a black velvet cap with an orange feather kept in its place by a brooch of diamonds and pearls; a gold chain is hung round the throat studded with jewels.

Fireside Chat.

ARRANGEMENT OF CHRISTMAS CARDS.

IT is always puzzling to know what to do with the beautiful and varied cards that kind friends shower down upon us at Christmas, New Year, and Easter.

We like, at least, many of us do, to preserve them, and at the same time show them off.

Most interesting albums are now to be seen, filled with cards, sorted, artistically arranged, dated, surrounded by monogram and autograph of the sender, or some pleasing message.

I heard recently of one of these albums, in which the leaves were of different colored satin, edged with silk gimp, and the photograph of the sender of each card was cut out and inserted in the corner, wherever it could best be placed with the card.

The cards were not very close together. The dates were written in thick gold paint.

The satin was tacked on to the cardboard leaves, the stitches hidden by the gimp.

The cover of another album was of satin, painted over with flowers, with an aperture cut slantways, into which a large and handsome card was slipped in from the back.

The first page of the album was devoted to a large and elaborate monogram, with "My Cards" inscribed underneath, in quaint, floral letters.

Oblong albums are the best adapted for showing cards off to advantage, and one measuring 17in. long by 13in. broad or thereabouts is a very good size; there should be plenty of "guards," to prevent undue pressing.

The gelatine, and still more novel and uncommon tortoiseshell cards, should be placed in the centre, in a place of distinction.

If a collector does not care to paint or etch round each card or page, neat linens in color should be cleanly ruled round each.

If the envelope containing the card is ornamental, even if passed through the post, it could be pasted on first, with its card laid on half across, but not to conceal the design, or part, at least, of the name and address written on.

Some of the fancy envelopes are very pretty, and deserve a place in an album arranged thus.

If the envelope is more attractive than the card, it could be fully shown with only half the card peeping out of it.

This requires a little management, but adds considerably to the effect and interest of an album.

A foreign-stamped envelope can be shown off in the same way if worthy.

If the plush and fringed cards are gummed in, a small button should be sewn at the corners to prevent the page pressing on it.

I have lately seen, in course of preparation, two sorts of screens which are worthy of note.

One was in the form of a large butterfly. The body was made of brown plush, stuffed, with fancy buttons for eyes.

The outspread cardboard wings were covered with cards of all shapes and sizes put close together.

The stand of the screen was in the centre of the body.

Both sides were covered with cards, but the best were all on one side.

The other style of screen had three folds, or panels, almost pointed at the top.

Each panel was covered with pale blue satin paper, and the cards, all carefully selected, were sparingly put on, some of them being cut to shape.

Round every card was a very narrow gold bending, such as can be purchased at a paper-hanger's.

A dado of gold paper reached up to the distance of about half a yard, cut in deep points,

At each point was a flower or a figure cut out of cards, that the collector did not care very much about.

The dado had apertures cut into it, principally oval, but a few square, showing really good and large cards peeping through.

These cards were put on first before the gold paper.

The frame of the screen was black, picked out with gold. The whole was really beautiful.

A coat of white clear varnish was to be passed over the whole, when complete. The same pair of busy hands were also at work on a splash board, to go behind a washing stand, which was very pretty.

The foundation was millboard, bound with broad red ribbon, sewn on with a very course packing needle, put through at short equal distances.

The cards were close together but not regular, with the exception of one row at the base, matching tolerably, forming a sort of miniature dado.

On and partially over these came the others in irregular but pleasing array, while round the edge, where any filling in and softening was required, were odds and ends of flowers cut out of indifferent cards.

A small table looks well with cards put on regularly round the edge and in the extreme centre, with others and better ones scattered broadcast over the entire table, half over and half under each other, as taste and the design on each dictates.

There are wooden tables now sold at fancy work and other shops, with deal tops and black and gold legs, which are very suitable for covering with cards.

Strong gum is required, and a weight to press the cards.

It is best to see that there are no lumps in the gum, or they are apt to force themselves through thin cards.

Extra panels made of cardboard and covered with cards can be made for tying on to standing screens.

I have seen plate-glass "gambs" on each side of a mantelshelf with Christmas and other cards arranged on millboard placed behind.

LABOR judiciously and continuously.

Correspondence.

INQUIRER.—No reduction in rates on account of not taking premium. See page 8.

M. E. W., (Bethlehem, Pa.)—1. We do not know. 2. We should say he changed his mind at the last moment.

CLOVER, (Wheeling, W. Va.)—Take no notice of the gentlemen; if they desire to become acquainted with you, they will soon find some means of obtaining an introduction.

QUEENIE, (Pittsilvania, Va.)—The gauntlet was once a military punishment: hence, running the gauntlet now means passing through an ordeal. 2. Throwing down the gauntlet means to challenge.

E. L. P., (Barnes, Conn.)—The actual Scriptural meaning of Mispah is a watch-tower. The meaning it is intended to convey on articles of jewelry is "I will watch over thee." A E I is the Greek word which signifies "for ever."

MASK, (Philadelphia, Pa.) — A Gipsy would wear a blue, rather short skirt, a white apron, a scarlet cloak, with a hood, and a yellow silk handkerchief tied carelessly over her head, or a straw gipsy hat tied down over her ears; she might carry a pack of cards.

VIOLET, (Terre Bonne, La.)—If you consider you were the person in fault in the matter, write and say so, expressing regret for your folly and unkindness. If he desires to renew the intimacy it will give him the opportunity to do so; if he does not, you must do your best to forget him.

EMMIE, (Marion, Ala.)—Your handwriting is beautiful, and denotes that the writer is one who would excel in anything she put her hand to. She is a lady of artistic taste and is very neat and exact in everything she does. She might be peevish and fretful at times, but is generally agreeable.

KATE, (Ogle, Tenn.)—"To call upon" would be the correct form of speaking. 2. If the present be a very trifling one, there might be more importance attached to returning it than to keeping it. Presents of any value should be at once returned to gentlemen who are comparative strangers.

E. S. G., (Marquette, Mich.)—The first thing for him to do is to tell the young lady, in the kindest manner possible, just exactly what the truth of the matter is with regard to his feelings. If she should hold him to his promise after that, he would either have to keep the engagement or take the consequence of breaking it.

E. G., (Calvert, Md.) — Many persons now wear deep mourning for six months, and then go entirely out of mourning; others, again, wear it for a year. And some persons wear only a band of crape round the arm, and consider that all that is necessary. It is now more a matter of feeling than fashion. Black velveteen could be worn with or without crape.

BASHFUL, (Lincoln, Wis.)—If you have only rather a full face, by no means attempt to make yourself thinner; it is quite a mistaken notion to suppose a very thin person is much admired by those who understand anything about beauty. If you observe the statues of Hebe or Venus, works of art that have been admired for centuries, you may form an estimate of the perfection of the feminine figure.

J. M., (Warren, Pa.) — You must be guided by the size and shape of your album in the arrangement of your scraps; you might place a large picture in the centre of a page, rule lines round it to form a kind of frame, then arrange small scraps cornerwise at the sides; or place a round picture in the centre, and frame it with a wreath of flowers. Colored scraps and photographs or engravings should not be arranged on the same page.

JESSIE, (Bucks, Pa.)—1. Simply ask her if she will do you the favor to go with you to the place intended. 2. How the custom originated of making people "fools" on the first of April nobody knows. Oriental scholars say it is derived from the Hindoos. It is common throughout Europe. Here we call the person upon whom the trick is played a fool. In France he is called a silly fish, and in Scotland a gowk, which means a cuckoo. The cuckoo is supposed to be the greatest fool among birds.

CHARLEY, (Muskingum, O.)—The principal food for white mice is bread and milk, oatmeal, grits, and any other common food except cheese or meat, which are objectionable. There are several sorts of cages for keeping mice. The most common is similar to that of a squirrel's, its size depending on the number of inmates it is to contain. Some cages are furnished with a wire wheel, by which the little ones amuse themselves for several minutes at a time during the day. Other cages are built like houses, with separate rooms and staircases, which the mice are obliged to ascend in order to obtain their food, which is usually placed in the highest story.

R. K., (Suffolk, N. Y.)—The course of your two friends is clear. You say there are two obstacles to your friend's marrying the lady he loves and who loves him—namely, that the young man's parents are opposed to the match, and that the young man is doing nothing, and, therefore cannot support a wife. To us it seems that these two articles are reducible to one. The young man's parents very wisely object to their son taking unto himself a wife until he is able to support and maintain her as he ought to do. Our advice is that your friend should follow the counsel of his parents and remain single for the present. Meanwhile, let him go to work to earn his own livelihood and to place himself in a position that he will be able to support a wife. The young lady, if she loves him truly, will wait for him.

GEORGE, (Philadelphia, Pa.)—There were many battles between the Prussians and the French during the late war, the most important of which were:—That of Weissenburg, August 4, in which the Crown Prince nearly annihilated the corps of General Douay; that of Woerth, on August 6, in which the Prince attacked Marshal M'Mahon in a strong position on some hills, and after hard fighting, so thoroughly broke up the French army, that the remnants of it were entirely lost to view for a fortnight. The next was the battle of Courcelles, near Metz, in which both sides claimed the victory; but its effect was such as to induce the French army to retire from Metz, and commence the retreat that led to the battles of Gravelotte, Mars-la-tour, and Vionville, fought on the 14th, 16th, and 18th of August, the most fiercely-contested and sanguinary battles of the campaign, in which the French were compelled to retreat to the shelter of the entrenched camp at Metz. The losses on both sides were immense. On the 1st of September, the decisive battle was fought, that resulted in the surrender of the Emperor and the whole French army, with the fortress of Sedan.